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Afghan mujahedeen sign accord

Kabul under 'martial law'

MOSCOW, Feb 5, (Reuters): The Afghan capital of Kabul is "effectively" under martial law, the Soviet news agency Tass said as Moscow's troops continued their withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Tass corrected an earlier report from Kabul that stated bluntly the capital was under martial law.

The correction said the word "effectively" had been omitted from that report, which should have read: "Kabul is effectively under martial law."

In Kabul, the Afghan Defence Ministry denied today that martial law had been declared in the city.

Tass said tensions had begun to rise in the Afghan capital as Soviet forces pulled out and some new security measures, including car searches, had been taken.

"Kabul is effectively under martial law," Tass said. "For the purpose of ensuring security the armed units of people's militia and volunteers stepped up control over the deliveries arriving in the capital and are searching vehicles," it said.

Pact

Meanwhile, leaders of separate Afghan rebel groups based in Pakistan and Iran signed a unity pact in Tehran today, Tehran Radio reported.

"With the beginning of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the capital, tensions started to rise," the news agency quoted

Daud Razmyar, first secretary of the Kabul city committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, as saying.

He said weapons had been distributed among party organisations in Kabul "so that every one of us could defend the cause."

Tass added that the sound of battle could be heard in Kabul's suburbs as government troops fired at rebels.

"The artillery fire rings out in the suburbs where Army units are pounding the positions of the intractable opposition in Paghman and other regions, from where they stage raids on the capital," it said.

Outcome

A Soviet television commentator said earlier today that the final outcome of the nine-year war apparently would be decided on the battlefield.

The Tass report said the Afghan opposition had no hope of capturing the capital "immediately" after the Soviet soldiers had left.

"Therefore it banks on undermining the regime from within, on sabotage and the use of the economic hardships which arose as a result of the blockade," Tass said.

A huge convoy of Soviet troops and military vehicles left Kabul on Friday morning for the border. Only several hundred Soviet soldiers remain in the capital, most of them guarding the airport.

Coalition

Tehran radio, said an agreement among Afghan rebel groups was expected to ensure a peaceful transition of power after the Soviet troop withdrawal due to be complete by Feb 15.

It gave no details of the pact signed between the Iran-based coalition of eight Shiite Muslim

resistance groups and the seven-party alliance of mainly Sunni Muslims based in Pakistan.

The radio said Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, who has been seeking to unite the rebel factions, was at today's meeting in Tehran.

Velayati had returned on Thursday from a two-day visit to Pakistan with Sibtullah Mojaddidi, leader of the alliance based there.

"Now we have reached the gate of victory it is necessary we reach a comprehensive understanding with other brothers on the formation of a government," the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Mojaddidi as saying on arrival in Tehran.

Rejected

Mojaddidi, a moderate among the mujahedeen, had sought to persuade the Iran-based guerrillas to take part in a consultative council meeting to approve an interim government.

The Iran-based coalition had rejected an offer of 10 seats each on the council, or "shura," arguing that they should have a total of 120 seats to reflect the proportion of Shiite Afghans.

A meeting of the council has been set for Feb 10.

A prominent Afghan rebel leader said in Peshawar guerrillas had arranged for Kabul to surrender once the last of 115,000 Soviet troops had left Afghanistan. But Afghan President Najibullah, declared today his government will fight "till the last moment."

"We have made arrangements that Kabul will fall from inside," firebrand Muslim guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar said in an interview late yesterday, 11 days before the last Soviet soldier was due to go home after an unsuccessful nine-year war.

Pakistan test-fires long-range rockets

ISLAMABAD, Feb 5, (Reuters): Pakistan has successfully test-fired its first long-range surface-to-surface rockets, Army Chief General Mirza Aslam Baig said today.

Baig, quoted by the official APP news agency, said in a speech that two versions of the missiles with a range of 300 km (185 miles) and 80 km (50 miles) respectively were tested recently. He did not give a date.

Guidance

"These are extremely accurate systems and can carry a payload of over 500 kg (1,100 pounds)," he told military officers at the National Defence College at Rawalpindi, near Islamabad.

"These missiles, including their guidance systems, have been developed indigenously."

he said.

The development could signal a revival of tension between India and Pakistan, which have fought three wars since gaining independence from Britain in 1947.

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi warned Pakistan on Friday that India would take steps to protect itself if reports of a Pakistani missile test were true. Rajiv also accused Islamabad of obtaining material to enhance the explosive power of nuclear weapons.

Baig said Pakistan would also be able to roll out its first home-made tanks within two years.

He called the missile production a "landmark achievement in indigenous arms production" by Pakistan, which at present gets

its main arms supplies from the United States.

Baig said Pakistan planned to achieve self-reliance in the production of all types of weapons, ammunition, electronics and other equipment. It was already 90 per cent self-sufficient in ammunition, he said.

Weapons

In New Delhi, head of the government-funded Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses said Pakistan must have had help from a friendly country to develop the weapons, which he described as cross-border missiles.

The institute's head, retired Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, said: "It is difficult to believe a country which hardly produces bicycles can make extremely

accurate systems."

He told Reuters: "It is inevitable that they have taken help or assistance from a friendly country."

Singh said the test firing did not necessarily mean Pakistan had the capability to produce the weapons.

Pakistan and India accuse each other of planning to acquire nuclear weapons and says its own nuclear programme is peaceful.

A month ago Rajiv paid the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Pakistan in nearly 30 years.

His meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, head of a democratic government after 11 years of military rule, raised hopes of better relations between the countries.



Shevardnadze (left) meeting Pakistani Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan. (Reuters wirephoto)

Benazir to visit Soviet Union

ISLAMABAD, Feb 5, (Agencies): Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has accepted an invitation to visit the Soviet Union, the government announced today.

An official statement said visiting Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze made the invitation during a meeting with

the Pakistani leader.

The date for her trip would be worked out later, the statement said.

The statement said Shevardnadze had also invited President Ghulam Ishaq Khan to Moscow, but did not mention whether the head of state had accepted.

Shevardnadze is in Pakistan to discuss ways to end the Afghan civil war. He has extended his visit today by another day, to meet with Afghan rebels.

Shevardnadze today also held talks with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sahebzada Yaqub Khan.

Extremists kill two Sikh leaders

CHANDIGARH, India, Feb 5, (Reuters): Sikh extremists fighting for a separate state in northern Punjab shot dead two moderate Sikh leaders today in an attack outside a school, police said.

Three gunmen waited outside the high school, where moderate Sikhs were attending a celebration marking the school's 50th anniversary, and fired at the victims with Chinese-made AK-47 rifles as they were getting into a car.

Baldev Singh Khokhar, a leader of the moderate Akali Dal Party in Punjab, and Rajinder Kaur, daughter of the late Akali Dal leader Tara Singh and a former Akali Dal Member of Parliament in Punjab, died in the attack, police said.

Over the weekend, five people including two Sikh extremists were killed when a security force was ambushed in the Punjab's Ferozepur district, west of Chandigarh.

In a separate incident, a person was hanged by extremists in Chandigarh, 150 miles (240 km) north of New Delhi, last night. Five people, mostly Hindus, have been hanged in the troubled state in the past month.

The Hindu newspaper reported today that Sikh separatists had developed explosives-filled remote-control toy airplanes that could be used to carry out assassinations.

The newspaper, quoting police sources, said the planes have apparently not been used so far.

An intensive check was made on radio-controlled model planes that performed at a rally in New Delhi on Jan 27 which was attended by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, it said.

Improved ties with US not in sight: Iran

NICOSIA, Feb 5, (Reuters): Iranian President Ali Khamenei said today Tehran was not interested in improving ties with Washington while the United States remained hostile to the Islamic Republic.

Khamenei said new US President George Bush could help end the rift between Iran and the United States by changing Washington's policies towards Tehran, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported.

"What makes us adopt our current stand is the continued enmity and... plotting... by the United States towards the Islamic Republic and the revolution," Khamenei told local and foreign correspondents visiting Tehran for the 10th anniversary of the Iranian Revolution.

He said Iran wanted to have good relations with all countries, but added: "South Africa, Israel and the United States... are deprived of having ties with Iran."

Khamenei described recent reports of human rights abuses in Iran as "biased and fabricated" and said such stories should be treated cautiously.

'Lawrence of Arabia'

NEW YORK, Feb 5, (AP): A newly restored version of the epic American film "Lawrence of Arabia," scheduled to open here later this week, was previewed before a star-studded audience that included the movie's leading actors, Omar Sharif and Peter O'Toole, and its director, David Lean.



Sheikh Saad leaves for Iraq today

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): HH the Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad al-Ahmed al-Jabir al-Sabah leaves for Baghdad tomorrow for a three-day official visit at the invitation of Iraq's Deputy Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council Izzat Ibrahim.

A Kuwaiti newspaper yesterday quoted authoritative Iraqi sources as saying that Sheikh Saad's discussions with Iraqi leaders "will cover the questions of the demarcation of the border."

After the Aug 20 ceasefire in the Gulf war, Iraqi officials suggested that it was time to settle a 28-year-old border dispute.

Iraq's Deputy Premier, Taha Yassin Ramadan, told a group of Kuwaiti journalists recently that negotiations would open soon for demarcation of the border.

The Crown Prince will be accompanied by a delegation comprising Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Rashed al-Rashed, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Saoud Mohammed al-Osaimi, Trade and Industry Minister Faisal Abdul Razak al-Khaled, other officials and chief editors of local dailies.

Smugglers try to swap camels for vehicles

BAGHDAD, Feb 5, (Reuters): Smugglers tried to sneak 197 camels and thousands of sheep out of Iraq last year to pay for luxury imports like video recorders and four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The official Iraqi News Agency said yesterday the animals were among goods seized in 1988 by customs officials who also confiscated large amounts of foreign currency and precious metals. An Arab diplomat said the smugglers intended to sell the goods in foreign countries and use the proceeds to import such items as electrical appliances, clothes and Toyota Land Cruisers.

DAY BY DAY

At times, one may need some help legally from a ministry, but is deprived of the rights either by the minister, the undersecretary or even an employee.

When any of these employees of the ministry refuse the individual's legal rights, the latter will not even be permitted to explain his case. Rather he will be termed a troublemaker and doors will be closed in his face.

When this happens and the citizen makes a complaint, he is proved wrong and accused of lying and told never to come to the ministry again.

This is happening simply because the ministries do not give people official documents or proof to state that the ministry refused the application, or postponed taking a decision or did not even study it.

Very much long to see a solution provided to eradicate this unwanted and unnecessary dilemma.

Zahed Matar

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آج کے اردو صفحات

- کابل میں مارشل لا اور گولیا
- سویٹ وزیر خارجہ کے
- پاکستانی رہنماؤں سے مذاکرات
- پاکستان کے دور مار میزائل
- تیار کر لئے
- اکبر یحیی بلوچستان کے
- وزیر اعلیٰ بن گئے
- سری لنکا میں بندر ناٹیکس
- پر قتلان حملہ
- سکھ انتہا پسندوں نے ایک
- رہنما کو گولی مار دی
- پاکستان میں منموہن افراوی
- فرست ختم کردی گئی

WEATHER

RATHER cold weather with light to moderate north-westerly wind. State of sea: slight to moderate. High water: 1.00 pm, 11.30 pm. Low water: 6.30 am, 6.09 pm. Sunrise: 5.35 am. Sunset: 5.30 pm. Maximum temperatures recorded: Kuwait: 16°C 61°F. Bahrain: 15°C 59°F. Minimum temperatures recorded: Kuwait: 6°C 32°F. Bahrain: 4°C 39°F. Maximum temperatures expected: Kuwait: 15°C 59°F. Bahrain: 15°C 59°F. Maximum humidity recorded: Kuwait: 51 per cent. Bahrain: 42 per cent. Fallak: 45 per cent.

King Hussein in Iraq for talks on Arab council

BAGHDAD, Feb 5, (AP): King Hussein arrived today for talks with President Saddam Hussein that will include plans for a four-country economic grouping, diplomatic sources said.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Prime Minister Zeid Al Rifai accompanied Hussein.

He said the leaders will discuss the Palestinian problem, efforts to settle the Iraq-Iran war and the proposed Arab co-operation council linking Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and North Yemen.

Before leaving for Baghdad, Hussein met briefly with Osama

Al Baz, an adviser to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who handed the King a message from the Egyptian leader, according to official sources.

The sources did not describe the substance of Baz' talks and his visit was not reported by Jordan's official news agency or broadcasting stations. Baz left immediately after the meeting.

Meanwhile, Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud Al Zouebi arrived in Sana'a to discuss with officials the proposed grouping.

On arrival statement, Zouebi said his talks would centre on promoting bilateral rela-



King Hussein

tions and co-operation. But diplomatic sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the main purpose of the trip was to probe into the grouping.

Israelis kill 5 in south Lebanon

OCCUPIED Jerusalem, Feb 5, (Agencies): Israeli soldiers fatally shot five guerrillas in south Lebanon, an Army spokesman said today, and a 17-year-old Palestinian was reported killed in a separate clash between troops and rioters in the occupied Gaza Strip.

Twenty-eight Palestinians, including a two-year-old boy, also were wounded in clashes in the seaside strip, Arab reports said.

The Army confirmed there was one confrontation today with protesters in the Jabalya

refugee camp in the Gaza Strip and said the camp's 50,000 residents were put under curfew. Reports of casualties were being checked, a military spokesman said.

In the West Bank, a group of Jewish settlers seized two Arab-owned buildings in the city of Hebron, claiming the structures had been used to stage stoning and firebomb attacks on Israelis, Israel Radio reported. One report said the settlers left the buildings after negotiations with soldiers.

The violence in Lebanon erupted last night on the border of Israel's self-proclaimed security zone in the country's south, near the town of Hasbaya, eight kilometres (five miles) north of the Israeli border, an Army spokesman said.

The spokesman said soldiers "on an operational mission" in the area opened fire on a squad of guerrillas advancing toward the Israeli-policed zone, killing five.

Underground leaders in Ramallah have called on Palestinians not to drive their cars for a day to protest against seizures by the military authorities.

Stalled

Velayati also told Dumas, Iraq was blocking progress in Gulf war peace talks, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported. The talks have been stalled since they started in August after a ceasefire in the eight-year war.

Dumas is aiming to speed up a return to normal relations between France and Iran. Diplomatic ties were re-established

last year after the last French hostages held by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon were freed.

Commercial and political ties have dwindled in the decade since the fall of the Shah and the return from French exile of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Dumas' task is complicated by pressure from French human rights activists and France's ruling Socialist Party to confront his hosts with widespread reports of mass executions of opponents.

France and Iran severed diplomatic relations in July 1978 but restored them last June following the release of the remaining French hostages held by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon.

Dumas met President Ali Khamenei and told him Iran and France should smooth the overpast misunderstandings on the basis of mutual respect, IRNA reported. It quoted him as calling for expanded ties and co-operation.

Khamenei replied that strong ties were possible. "The Islamic Republic pursues logical political ties with world countries with reason, but the imposed war created some sour feelings," IRNA quoted the Iranian leader as saying.

Iran spells out stand on Afghan issue

TEHRAN, Feb 5, (Reuters): Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told his French counterpart Roland Dumas today the future Afghan government had no room for members of the Moscow-backed administration in Kabul.

French officials said the Iranian minister told Dumas he also saw no place for exiled Afghan King Zahir Shah.

"We would like to avoid a bloodbath," Velayati told Dumas, who today began the first visit by a French minister to Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Iran, which hosts a coalition of eight rebel groups from neighbouring Afghanistan, has been a centre of last-minute negotiations on the country's future as the Feb 15 deadline for a Soviet military withdrawal nears.

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Israel must withdraw, says Jordan

BAHRAIN, Feb 5, (Agencies): Jordan will discuss confederation with the newly-proclaimed Palestinian state only after Israel withdraws from occupied Arab lands, Jordanian Prime Minister Zeid Al Rifai was quoted today as saying.

"No agreement has been concluded with the PLO on a merger... the important thing is Israel's withdrawal... relations between Jordan and the Palestin-

ian state come next," Rifai told Bahrain's Arabic daily newspaper Akhbar Al Khaleej.

"Efforts should be concentrated on Israeli withdrawal and the Palestinians' right to set up an independent Palestinian state," he added.

Future

Rifai said Jordan was co-operating fully with the PLO. "We are in constant contact with the PLO and support all its

decisions," he said.

Meanwhile, Ethiopia has recognised the Palestine state and also expressed support for an international conference to seek solutions to the Middle East conflict, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

The Sri Lanka government will give full diplomatic representation to the PLO effective from tomorrow, according to officials.

Military cuts vital to improve Soviet life

MOSCOW, Feb 5, (Reuters): The Soviet Union cannot hope to achieve improvements in its standard of living without large military cuts, a senior Soviet commentator said yesterday in the government newspaper Izvestia.

Stanislav Kondrashov, analysing last week's publication of troop and arms levels in Europe by the Warsaw Pact, praised the disclosure as a step towards realising Moscow's repeated promises to publish details of its defence budget.

But he said Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev would not be able to fulfil his pledges to do away with chronic shortages of food and other basic goods unless he could lighten the country's defence commitments.

"Our opponents in the West and in NATO maintain that there is an imbalance in Europe favouring the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact," he wrote.

Imbalance
"But for the individual Soviet citizen, for his everyday life, this imbalance takes on another meaning — and one not in our favour... it is this imbalance that must be done away with, achieving lower military preparedness for the sake of raising the people's standard of living."

Kondrashov said the Soviet Union's relative contribution to the Warsaw Pact far outweighed that of the United States to the Western military alliance

NATO, with Moscow providing a far greater proportion of aircraft, ships and other hardware.

Even making allowances for cheaper military equipment, he said, "one cannot escape the conclusion that support of military strategic parity falls more heavily on our shoulders than on those of the West's prosperous citizens."

In disclosing the figures last week, Warsaw Pact defence ministers repeated assertions of a rough parity with NATO in military personnel but acknowledged for the first time numerical superiority in tanks, tactical missile-launchers and artillery.

It said NATO had a lead in ships, aircraft carriers and certain types of aircraft. NATO has welcomed the disclosures but disagreed with some of the criteria used.

Kondrashov said the Soviet Union maintained the bulk of its troops within Europe while the United States had only a "forward post" on the continent.

Moscow's Warsaw Pact allies, he said, could not take offence at a recognition that they were outweighed by Washington's NATO partners.

"In terms of population, economic potential and scientific and technological development, East Germany is not West Germany, Poland is not France, Czechoslovakia is not Britain, Hungary is not Italy and Bulgaria is not Canada," he wrote.

Mutual inspections by NATO and Warsaw Pact are working well

STOCKHOLM, Feb 5, (Reuters): A two-year-old agreement which gives NATO and the Warsaw Pact the right to inspect each other's military exercises at 36 hours notice appears to be a major success.

Documents collected by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and made available to Reuters reveal the NATO and Warsaw Pact nations have made use of the facility nine times since the landmark agreement went into effect in January 1987.

Reports by US inspectors show they were able to move around the sites of East bloc manoeuvres with a virtually no limitations — something which would have been unthinkable before the agreement took effect.

Evident
A report of an exercise north of Minsk in the Soviet Union in August 1987 said: "The inspection team experienced no interference with the full use of the equipment they were permitted to use (maps, photo-cameras, binoculars, dictaphones and aeronautical charts)."

"The team walked tank lines, visited units and photographed equipment and personnel without interference. The team was not prevented from speaking

directly with the troops."

Another report compiled by US officers who inspected a Warsaw Pact exercise in Hungary in February 1988 concluded:

"We believe that it is becoming increasingly evident that inspection... can make a significant contribution to openness and the confidence-building process."

Negative
And a report written after an inspection of an exercise in Poland in July 1988, said:

"We welcome the co-operative atmosphere in which inspections have been conducted. In our view, participating states are recognising increasingly that an inspection is not a negative occurrence."

The right to inspect was a major part of the Stockholm document on confidence and security-building measures signed in September 1986 by the United States, Canada, the Soviet Union and 32 European nations. It took effect on Jan 1, 1987.

"It is clear from the official reports we have collected that for the most part co-operation has been excellent and has improved with time and practice," said Richard Fieldhouse, a military

analyst at SIPRI.

The Stockholm document requires signatories to provide dates of all forthcoming military exercises involving more than 17,000 troops.

Any state has the right to demand an inspection of any exercise. Host nations must respond within 24 hours and give access to inspectors within 36 hours of receiving a request.

Divide
Inspections last 48 hours and are carried out by four observers who can divide into two groups. The host nation has to provide them with helicopters, ground vehicles and communication facilities and allow them to go wherever they want within certain defined limits.

Of the 18 inspections so far carried out, the US and Soviet Union have each conducted five, Britain and East Germany two each. The others were carried out by West Germany, Turkey, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Fieldhouse said that before the agreement took effect, many experts had feared that a request for an inspection would raise the political temperature and that ground commanders would assume inspectors were enemy intelligence officers and put obstacles in their way.

Soviet Muslims confront police in rally

MOSCOW, Feb 5, (Reuters): Some 200 Muslims demanding state intervention in the affairs of a religious authority confronted police and disrupted traffic at an illegal rally in the Central Asian city of Tashkent, Tass said yesterday.

The official news agency said the Muslims from throughout Central Asia took to the streets for three hours after a prayer meeting on Friday in Tashkent's Tilla-Sheikh Mosque.

"Public transport was disrupted," it said. "Measures were taken by police to prevent violations of public order and protect the security of citizens and the believers themselves."

Shouted
Tass said no clashes occurred with police during the meeting or march, which did not receive permission from authorities in Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan.

But it was clear the marchers had confronted police in the streets.

The agency said the protesters had shouted religious slogans and urged the government to intervene in the activities of the religious board of Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. It gave no further details.

Religious practice remains strong among the Soviet Union's Muslims, estimated by Western experts to number about 50 million, and there have been signs of growing religious consciousness among them.

Green Islamic flags and portraits of Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini were seen in the centre of the Azerbaijani capital Baku during last year's disturbances over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Uzbek Prime Minister Gaydar Kadyrov told representatives of

Friday's protesters that their grievances could only be dealt with by religious bodies. A board meeting is to examine the issues next week.

On New Year's Day, Afghan military cadets under the influence of drink and drugs rampaged through the streets of Tashkent, killing three people and injuring more than 30.

Cossiga's tour

ROME, Feb 5, (Reuters): Italian President Francesco Cossiga left today for a six-day trip to Africa.

Cossiga, accompanied by Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, was due to stop over in Egypt for talks on the Middle East with President Hosni Mubarak. From there he will go on to Kenya, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Somalia.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bereaved family to get \$1.5 million

SEATTLE, Wash., Feb 5, (Reuters): A jury has awarded \$1.5 million to an Italian family that lost two members when a Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 slammed into a mountain in Japan in 1985, killing 520 people.

The civil lawsuit against the Boeing Co settled on Friday in King County court was filed by Heidi Moroni, 48, who lost her husband and a son, and by Alessandro Moroni, 18, who is Moroni's other son.

It was the first case involving the crash to go to trial anywhere in the world although lawyers are considering claims in Japan, the United States and Britain.

Moroni, who had sought \$6.5 million, said the jury's award did not adequately address her loss.

Epidemic threat

MOSCOW, Feb 5, (Reuters): Sanitary conditions have worsened in parts of northern Armenia struck by an earthquake in December and officials warned yesterday that epidemics could break out as spring approached.

The Communist Party commission tackling the aftermath of the Dec 7 quake expressed concern about conditions in the area where at least 25,000 people were killed and more than 100,000 evacuated.

"Although thanks to the self-sacrificing work of doctors no epidemics have occurred in cities or rural regions, there remains a danger that they could break out, particularly with the coming of spring," it said in a report.

Ethics adviser

NEW YORK, Feb 5, (Reuters): President Bush's ethics adviser, who is also chairman of a \$500 million communications corporation, has told the New York Times that he knew of a White House ban against serving on corporate boards weeks ago, the newspaper reported today.

C. Boyden Gray, who as Bush's counsel and ethics aide is responsible for screening all presidential nominees, said his deputy told him in November about limits on outside income for White House employees and that he learned some weeks ago of a related prohibition.

Amnesty invited to visit Soviet Union

LONDON, Feb 5, (Reuters): Amnesty International said today it has been invited to visit the Soviet Union for the first time in a move seen as a breakthrough by the human rights group.

"We received a letter of invitation this month from the Soviet Academy of Sciences. This is a major step forward," said Amnesty spokesman Richard Roach.

The visit will be Amnesty's first to the Soviet Union. Since its foundation in 1961, the London-based group had made several requests to examine the human rights situation there.

Objectives
No date for the trip has been set and Amnesty was still deciding which places and people it would seek Soviet permission to visit, Roach said.

"Obviously one of our main objectives will be to find out what

steps the government is taking to meet the concerns we have about prisoners of conscience, as well as changes in Soviet law to protect human rights and abolish the death penalty," he said.

Last December Amnesty estimated there were about 140 prisoners of conscience being held in Soviet prisons or in psychiatric hospitals.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has pledged to improve his country's human rights record and Western countries including the United States and Britain say they have seen improvements over the past few months.

Gorbachev is planning to hold an international human rights conference in Moscow in 1991. Britain and the United States have provisionally accepted invitations to attend but said final decisions would depend on continued improvement in the human rights situation.

Coup raises hopes in Paraguay, says church

ASUNCION, Feb 5, (Reuters): The Roman Catholic church in Paraguay said hopes had been raised by the overthrow of General Alfredo Stroessner in a military coup that Western diplomats estimated had cost some 300 lives.

Catholic church leaders late yesterday issued a statement saying that the toppling of Stroessner, who had ruled the landlocked country with an iron fist for 34 years, had raised the people's hopes but cost the country dear.

The church, one of the fiercest opponents of the Stroessner regime, called for prayers to be said for the dead and wounded.

"The recent events... which raised an enormous wave of euphoria and hope has cost dear," the statement said.

Assumed
General Andres Rodriguez, a former supporter of Stroessner who led the coup, assumed the presidency on Friday promising to restore democracy and respect human rights.

It was unclear what would be the fate of Stroessner, who with his eldest son and two of his

cabinet ministers was under arrest at the headquarters of the First Cavalry Division.

Political sources said they would most likely be sent into exile, probably in Chile, one of the few countries that maintained cordial relations with the Stroessner government.

The Chilean government has said it would allow Stroessner to live there.

Heavy fighting broke out in Asuncion late on Thursday as tanks of the First Cavalry Division drove into town and bombarded the central police station and the barracks of the presidential bodyguard, where Stroessner was sheltering.

No official casualty figures were issued.

Relations between Stroessner and the Catholic church have deteriorated sharply over the past year as priests, branded as Marxists by the government, denounced human rights abuses.

Bishop Mario Medina, dubbed "the red-robed bishop" by Stroessner supporters, yesterday said he supported the coup as the only way to rid the country of the 76-year-old general.

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Yasmin and her new husband Jeffries, hold up their new wedding rings for photographers during a reception at the Plaza Hotel. (Reuters wirephoto)

Pakistani police slap Afghan women

QUETTA, Feb 5, (Reuters): Pakistani police yesterday caned and slapped Afghan women who were demonstrating against the arrest of their leader, witnesses said.

Farida Ahmadi, leader of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), was arrested on Friday in the Baluchistan provincial capital of Quetta on suspicion of working for the Soviet-backed Afghan government.

But a RAWA spokeswoman said the authorities arrested Ahmadi at the behest of Pakistan-based Muslim fundamentalist Afghan guerrilla leaders opposing women's freedom.

About 100 RAWA members and some Afghan children marched yesterday to the house of Baluchistan Governor Mohammad Musa, chanting slogans demanding Ahmadi's release.

More than 30 policemen broke up the demonstration, slapping RAWA activists in the face and beating some with canes, the witnesses said. The women and children ran away shrieking.

Ahmadi was arrested after a meeting of Afghan women at a hotel to commemorate the mysterious death two years ago in Quetta of RAWA founder Mina Kishwar Kamal.

Hindus to wash away their sins in rivers

ALLAHABAD, Feb 5, (AP): Millions of Hindus invoking their ancient faith's countless gods and goddesses converged today at the confluence of three rivers whose waters are thought to hold the power to wash away sins and end the cycle of birth and rebirth.

"Already five million people have come, and more and more are coming," Ravindra Gupta said, pointing at the steady flow on worshippers arriving in this central Indian city.

"We expect 15 million people will take holy baths on Monday," said Gupta, Allahabad's commissioner.

The holy fair is held every 12 years by the lunar calendar when a unique planetary convergence happens: Jupiter is in the Taurus constellation, the sun and moon are in Capricorn, and a complicated Hindu astronomical calculation of other planets and stars is fulfilled.

The planets' movements herald the Kumbh Mela, listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's biggest religious gathering.

Security

This year, police on horseback, in jeeps, observation posts and on foot are on alert, fearing Sikh extremists might extend their bloody attacks on Hindus to the Kumbh Mela.

"We are ready for everything," said Trinath Mishra, deputy inspector-general of police in Uttar Pradesh state.

"This fair is a sitting duck for terrorists, but we are no goose," Mishra said. "We can counter any eventualities."

About 12,000 policemen and 5,000 home guard militiamen have been deployed around the 3,000-acre fair site. There are 25 police watch towers equipped with television monitors, 25 police posts, 10 river police stations and 22 fire stations.

Soldiers at a nearby Army base also have been placed on alert.

New York witnesses a dazzling wedding

NEW YORK, Feb 5, (UPI): New York's society set, still awestruck from Princess Diana's visit, polished its diamonds again for the wedding of Princess Yasmin Aga Khan, daughter of 1940s movie queen Rita Hayworth and a former Pakistani diplomat Prince Ali Khan.

Yasmin married real estate developer Christopher Michael Jeffries in a private ceremony last night at Yasmin's posh Central Park West apartment.

A crowd of more than 100 spectators not on the exclusive guest list withstood freezing cold to glimpse the newlyweds as they arrived at a dazzling, black-tie reception at the Plaza Hotel.

Pausing for photographers and reporters, the couple held hands and looked into each other's eyes, while the bride flashed a wide smile reminiscent of her movie-star mother.

At a photographer's request, the new Mrs. Jeffries displayed her diamond-encrusted wedding band but declined to reveal their destination for a three-week honeymoon.

"We're very happy," she said. Her tall, handsome bridegroom embraced her and added, "It's very romantic."

It was the second marriage for both Jeffries, 38, and Yasmin, 39, who has been active in organiza-

tions promoting research in Alzheimer's disease. Hayworth died of the debilitating disease in 1987 at age 68.

The couple then proceeded to their reception, whose list of 350 invited guests included UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Patricia Hearst Shaw, US Senators Christopher Dodd and Larry Pressler, author Jerzy Kosinski, music executive Ahmet Ertegun, real estate developer Donald Trump and his wife, Ivana, and cosmetics heir-politician Ronald Lauder.

The guest list was sprinkled liberally with titles such as baron and countess.

Yasmin's wedding came on the heels of the Princess of Wales' whirlwind, three-day visit to New York, which was celebrated by the city's bluebloods with a series of glittering receptions. Diana left the Big Apple yesterday.

The poor, charmed by Diana's visits to homeless families and children with AIDS, crowded sidewalks for a glimpse of the princess.

Yasmin's ring bearer was Andrew Ali Aga Khan Embiricos, her three-year-old son from her 1985-87 marriage to Greek shipping heir Basil Embiricos.

Jeffries has a son and daughter from a previous marriage.

Move to pressure Moscow on Kampuchea

China delays summit confirmation

BEIJING, Feb 5, (Reuters): China has delayed the confirmation of a summit date with the Soviet Union in a move which diplomatic sources say is aimed at pulling more concessions from Moscow on the Kampuchean issue.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to China to prepare the first summit since 1959 ended in confusion with conflicting statements from the two sides.

Proposal

Giving an account of his meeting with 84-year-old Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in Shanghai, Shevardnadze had reporters running to telephones with the words:

"... We agreed on the date of the forthcoming Soviet-Chinese summit. The visit of Mikhail Gorbachev to the People's Republic of China will take place in mid-May of this year."

The summit would fully normalise state and Communist Party relations between the two countries, he said.

China had formally issued an

invitation on Friday to the Kremlin leader to visit Beijing. Chinese and Soviet officials had predicted the timing would be announced the next day.

However, just after Shevardnadze's plane left Beijing, Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Tian Zengpei told reporters at the airport mid-May was just a Soviet proposal which Beijing would consider.

He also disputed Shevardnadze's remarks that a meeting with Kampuchean guerrilla leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk was not discussed in talks with the Soviet minister.

The subject was raised, Tian said, quoting Shevardnadze as saying the time was not right to meet the exiled Sihanouk, who is currently in Beijing.

"In effect Tian said Shevardnadze was lying," an East European source commented.

"We hope the Soviet Union will make more efforts to promote a fair and reasonable settlement of the Kampuchean issue," Tian said in a sombre summary of Shevardnadze's three-day visit.

China and the Soviet Union, he went on, had failed to agree on the make-up of a future Kampuchean government after a withdrawal of Vietnam's Soviet-backed forces.

Diplomats said they were in no doubt that the summit would go ahead and probably in May but serious differences over Kampuchea had scuttled Moscow's attempts to push ahead and publicly set a specific date.

Differences

Said a Western diplomat: "It is in the Soviets' interest to set a date but not so for the Chinese. They want room to manoeuvre but the odds are that a summit will take place in May."

A well-informed Chinese source agreed.

"It's a question of face. Kampuchea is far from resolved and China wants more concessions. But the summit must take place in the first half of this year," he said.

The Soviet Union's support of Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea has long been one of three "obstacles" cited by China as

blocking a summit and normalisation of relations.

Moscow's forces in Afghanistan and its troop concentration along the border with China are the other two stated hurdles.

Pullout

Vietnam invaded Kampuchea in 1978 to oust the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge but has said it will withdraw its troops, said to number 50,000, by September if a political settlement is reached.

Tian said the Soviet Union and China had similar or identical views on international supervision of a Vietnamese withdrawal and subsequent general elections with a role played by the United Nations.

The Soviet Union also agreed with China that after a pull-out, the military forces of the four Kampuchean factions would be frozen and possibly reduced. There would be no foreign troops or bases in Kampuchea.

But the two sides had not agreed on the shape of a Kampuchean government after Vietnam's withdrawal, Tian said.

Chinese art show shocks police

BEIJING, Feb 5, (Reuters): China's first major exhibition of avant-garde art made a shocking debut today — police closed it down after a young woman opened fire at a class sculpture in a "spontaneous art happening."

Already delayed by two years because of political problems, the exhibition opened with a fanfare of publicity at Beijing's China Art Gallery.

Spectators said young artists threw condoms and money into the air, undressed and rolled on raw eggs and sold pawns.

Then a young woman — said by some to be the artist herself — stood between two mirrors painted with the image of people making a telephone call and fired two shots from a small pistol.

"She had thought of using a bigger gun but this would have smashed the glass. The bullets just drilled two holes. Nobody was hurt. It was part of her art," a friend said.

Police quickly arrived — some armed with sub-machineguns — and detained the woman, 26-year-old Xiao Lu, and a man.

Onlookers were cleared out of the vast three-storey building and the exhibition was closed almost as soon as it had begun.

Bombs hurled at public meeting near Colombo

COLOMBO, Feb 5, (AP): Top opposition leader and former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike survived an apparent assassination attempt today when three bombs were hurled at a public meeting she was addressing, authorities said.

Bandaranaike, 72, suffered minor bruises in a stampede that followed the explosions, said a member of her Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

A military official, who cannot be identified under briefing rules, said at least 38 people attending the meeting in the town of Hinurakgoda, 165 kilometres northeast of Colombo, were injured.

At least 14 of the injured were taken to the hospital in serious condition, the official said.

Bandaranaike was scheduled to open her party's campaign for the Feb 15 general elections at the meeting.

In other violence, at least eight supporters of the ruling United National Party were killed yesterday by suspected Sinhalese militants, the military official

said. The deaths took place in three towns in southern Sri Lanka, the heartland of the island nation's majority ethnic group, the Sinhalese.

Killing

Meanwhile, in the north, at least five Tamils, the country's largest minority ethnic group, were killed last night by Tamil rebels fighting for an independent homeland, the official said.

Both Sinhalese militants and Tamil rebels oppose holding general elections but for different reasons.

The Sinhalese militants have vowed to disrupt the elections as part of their anti-government campaign launched in July 1987.

They are opposed to a peace accord signed by the government to persuade Tamil rebels to give up their fight for an independent homeland.

Most Tamil rebel groups accepted the accord. But the largest militia, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, rejected

the plan in late 1987 and have since begun killing moderate Tamils, whom they consider traitors.

Yesterday victims were all members of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Front, one of the Tamil groups that agreed to the government's peace formula.

They were shot and killed near the town of Achuvelli, about 300 kilometres north of Colombo, the military official said.

Sinhalese extremists say the July 29, 1987, peace accord gives the minority Tamils too many concessions.

Sinhalese make up 75 per cent of the country's 16 million people and control the government and military. Tamils, who make up 18 per cent of the population, claim they are discriminated against by the Sinhalese.

At least 8,500 people have been killed in the Tamil separatist war since it was launched in 1983. The Sinhalese extremists have been blamed for another 1,000 killings since July 1987.

Aquino says no to return of Marcos even if he dies

MANILA, Feb 5, (Reuters): President Corason Aquino is likely to forbid the return of deposed ruler Ferdinand Marcos' body to the Philippines if he dies in exile, fearing a homeland burial could spark violence, a senior official said today.

The official, who took part in discussions between Aquino and her advisers on whether Marcos should be allowed back into the country dead or alive, said this was "the emerging consensus" in the talks.

Aquino's estranged Vice-President Salvador Laurel returned to Manila yesterday from visiting the ailing former President in Hawaii hospital.

He quoted doctors as saying Marcos had less than a 10 per cent chance of living until next year.

Laurel said Marcos told him

he wanted to die in the Philippines.

The official, who requested anonymity, said in a telephone interview: "We believe the situation would be more controllable if the body is not here."

Violence

"Allowing Marcos' body here will not placate his supporters. It may become their rallying point. There will be demonstrations and Aquino supporters will also demonstrate. You'll have violence."

However, he said Marcos' remains could be temporarily buried abroad and allowed into the country "after a passage of time."

Laurel, who has broken with Aquino and now heads an opposition coalition, asked to see her on his return, saying he

had a message from Marcos. Aquino refused.

The Presidential palace, in an open rebuttal, said today Aquino felt there should be nothing secret in what Laurel had to tell her and that he should tell it to the public himself.

Aquino's administration has accused Marcos, his family and associates of stealing up to \$10 billion during his 20-year rule which ended in February 1986 in an uprising.

In New York last October a United States federal grand jury indicted Marcos, 71, and his wife Imelda on racketeering charges.

Marcos, who lives with his family in Honolulu, has been admitted to hospital three times since Dec 9 with a number of ailments including heart trouble, respiratory problems and pneumonia.

Mubarak plans to meet Bush in Tokyo

CAIRO, Feb 5, (Reuters): Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak plans to attend the funeral of the late Japanese Emperor Hirohito and may meet US President George Bush in Tokyo, Egyptian officials said today.

"Mubarak would like to see a lot of people in Tokyo and Bush must be at the top of the list," said one official.

"Funerals are quite useful from this point of view," a Western diplomat said. "It's inconceivable that both men would be in the same town and not make some kind of contact, though I haven't heard about a formal meeting."

King Hussein of Jordan, a close ally of Mubarak, has been invited to meet Bush at the Feb 24 funeral. Bush has also asked Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to visit Washington, possibly at the end of March or early April.

Egypt and its Arab allies are anxious to lobby the new US leader on their ideas for resolving the 40-year-old Arab-Israeli conflict.

Sharon holds talks with Spanish minister

MADRID, Feb 5, (AP): Israeli Trade and Industry Minister Ariel Sharon met with Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez today to study bilateral issues, a ministry official said.

The official said that during the one-hour talks Sharon and Fernandez Ordonez also discussed the relations between Israel and the European Economic Community, the visit of PLO leader Yasser Arafat to Spain and the next visits of the Spanish minister to three Arab countries.

Arafat visited Madrid on Jan 28 for talks with Fernandez Ordonez and his French and Greek counterparts Roland Dumas and Carole Papoulis to discuss a possible international peace conference on the Middle East. Spain is a firm advocate of such a conference.

The Spanish minister is scheduled to leave later this week for Egypt, Jordan and Syria for more discussions on the possible peace conference.

Spanish authorities twice

postponed Sharon's visit to Spain because the former defence minister's role in the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and Spain's close ties with Arab countries.

A year ago Deputy Prime Minister Alfonso Guerra, acting in Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez's absence, ordered a projected Sharon visit cancelled. Sources at the time cited the invasion and the subsequent massacre of Palestinian refugees in camps in Beirut.

Cancellation

A second Israeli proposed date would have put Sharon's visit in Madrid at the same time Arafat was meeting with Spanish and EEC officials.

Foreign Ministry officials stressed that Sharon's four-day visit is "purely commercial," and is being made in an EEC, not a bilateral, context. Spain currently holds the six-month rotating presidency of the 12-member trading bloc, which is Israel's most important export market.

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HH the Amir received at his office in Bayan Palace yesterday, the Senegalese Foreign Minister Ibrahim Falli who conveyed to him a message from the Senegal President Abdou Diouf. The meeting was attended by Kuwait's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Saoud Al Osaimeh.

Shevardnadze to visit Mideast capitals

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): Soviet Ambassador to Kuwait Ernest Zverev told a local Kuwaiti daily that Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze is scheduled to visit the Middle East in the near future.

Zverev refused to name the countries to be visited by the Soviet Foreign Minister but said that after his return home from Pakistan, Shevardnadze will discuss the schedule, of his Middle East tour.

Shevardnadze who arrived in Islamabad Sunday to hold talks with Pakistani officials on the future of Afghanistan announced at the end of his visit to China that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will visit China in May to convene the first summit between the two socialist countries in 30 years.

The paper quoted political sources in Kuwait as saying that Shevardnadze would make his Mideast tour this month in visits to Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, Tehran, and other Arab capitals.

GCC power grid committee to meet in Bahrain

BAHRAIN, Feb 5, (Reuters): The Power Grid Committee of the Gulf Co-operation Council will meet in Bahrain on Wednesday to discuss bids for the first phase of an electricity project between the six-state political and economic alliance.

The Gulf News Agency said today the first stage aimed at linking the capitals of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The second phase would link Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Training course

THE second training course for police patrols opened yesterday at the headquarters of Officers Training Institute, according to the Ministry of the Interior's Public Relations Department.

The four week course will be attended by 18 officers including three from United Arab Emirates (UAE), the department said.

The director of the institute Lieutenant Col. Ibrahim Nughimish in an opening speech confirmed the importance of this course by stating that patrol activities constituted the backbone of the Police Corps.

Call taxi licences may be stopped

TRANSPORTATION authorities are expected to stop issuing new licences for call taxis, according to reliable sources. The sources added that presently there are 60 companies operating in this field in the country. Only 10 companies are sufficient to provide these services they said.

A meeting was recently held to discuss public transportation problems in the country. Among the topics discussed was violations committed by some non-Kuwaitis who use their private cars as taxis specially in remote areas and areas in which bachelors live.

Cabinet briefed on outcome of League committee talks

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet today listened to a detailed report from Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed on the outcome of meetings of the Arab League Six-Man Committee, formed to seek a solution to the Lebanese ordeal, said State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Rashed Al Rashed.

Rashed added that during the cabinet's weekly session, chaired by HH the Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Sabah Al Sabah, Sheikh Sabah also briefed his fellow ministers on the positiveness and responsibility which reigned over the talks between the committee and the various Lebanese parties.

The Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister reported to the cabinet on his visit to Damascus, during which he conveyed a message to Syrian President Hafez Assad from HH the Amir and also his talks with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Cairo.

The council was also acquainted with future steps to be taken by the committee, in order to secure a settlement to the Lebanese crisis.

In this regard, Sheikh Saad, on his behalf and that of the ministers, expressed thanks to the sincere efforts exerted by the committee, asking the Almighty God to guide its actions to success.

Earlier in the session, the cabinet began its meeting by examining a message from US President George Bush to the Crown Prince and Premier, on bilateral relations and the latest on the Palestinian issue.

The cabinet also was briefed on the message received by Sheikh Saad from Moroccan Premier Izeddin Laraki, on bilateral relations and means of boosting them.

The cabinet heard from Rashed the outcome of last week's visit by Egyptian Information Minister Farouq Hosni, during which he met with the Amir and the Crown Prince and Premier and conveyed two messages to them from President Mubarak and Premier Atef Sedki.

Deedat, speaking at a lecture at the Kuwait Teachers Society organised by the International Islamic Charitable Organisation that invited him to visit Kuwait, said that the Christian missionaries publish millions of books annually that are distributed free to convert Muslim to Christianity.

He noted that numerous Christian missionaries roam Islamic countries under various covers in a bid to penetrate Islamic societies.

He noted that Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), had used messages to spread Islam despite difficulty of transport and writing at his time while Muslim with available means at their disposal.

Thunayyan Al Ghanim Centre to open on National Day

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): Minister of Public Health Dr Abdul Razzak Al Abdul Razzak said here today that Thunayyan Al Ghanim's Gastroenterology Centre will be of service to Kuwait and the Arab homeland in extending medical services.

The minister, in a statement to KUNA, said the centre will be officially opened on Kuwait's 28th National Day, February 25.

Dr Abdul Razzak lauded the initiative of the inheritors of the late Thunayyan Al Ghanim who donated costs of construction and equipment that exceeded three million Kuwaiti dinars (approximately \$10 million).

Dr Bassel Al Naqib, from the Amiri Hospital, described the centre as one of the most advanced centres in the Middle East, which will be prepared to receive patients as of next April, but surgery could be performed at the centre by next autumn.

The centre, he added, will be in continuous touch with Arab and international centres to follow up various scientific developments in gastroenterology.

Kuwaiti physicians will have good training opportunities at the centre after passing an internal diseases test, Naqib said.

He told a seminar organised by the Faculty of Education at Kuwait University on the theme of "General Education - the current situation - aspirations and future hopes" that this requires an effective educational administration which should have the flexibility and ability to translate adopted educational objectives into practical plans.

He added that the 1970s had witnessed significant development towards modernising the educational process.

He said this qualitative development coincided with a quantitative one in the field of educational services.

He disclosed that there were 606 schools in Kuwait with 370,927 students of different stages. About 55 per cent are Kuwaitis. He added that there were about 27,815 teachers of which about 63 per cent are Kuwaitis.

An Amiri decree forming the Higher Committee for re-evaluation and supervising the educational system had been issued in 1985, and the committee had recruited a number of

experts from international institutions to achieve its objectives. The committee had submitted its final report in 1987 which constituted the first comprehensive attempts for the re-evaluating of the country's educational system.

Dr Abdul Rahman Al Ahmed, the dean of the Faculty of Education was quoted as saying that the educational issue has gripped the mind of the country's officials in general and political leadership in particular.

He further said, in 1955 an Arab delegation had been invited to study the general education position in Kuwait and had submitted its report in this respect in the same year.

He added, in 1985 the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences had submitted its report aimed at developing the educational system. All these attempts had been crowned by the report submitted by the Higher Committee for the re-evaluation and supervision of the educational system in 1987.

He said the education officials in Kuwait were realising the importance of education in forming the country's future.

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Kuwait can treat most cancer cases: Naqeeb

DR Nael Al Naqeeb, the under-secretary at the Ministry of Public Health confirmed that Kuwait is capable of treating most cancer cases.

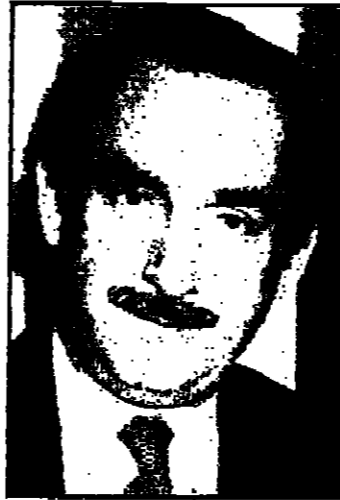
In statements published in a local daily, he said, that a spinal marrow transplant technique is being developed and added: "We will soon be building a new section for spinal cord transplantation."

Naqeeb, who is a cancer expert advised citizens to guard against the fatal disease by taking protective measures, avoiding exposure to radio-active substances and by undergoing regular medical checkups for early detection of any cancerous cells.

In this connection, he denied widespread assumptions that plastic surgery leads to cancer.

Naqeeb praised the high performance and services offered by the Central Drug Tests Laboratory and hinted that test-tube baby experiments in Kuwait could be expanded in future.

The official said that Kuwait



Dr Nael Al Naqeeb

does not suffer a lack of nurses, but suffers from the quality of nurses. The ministry prefers to recruit Arab nurses but faces hurdles as nurses in Arab and Islamic communities are not socially accepted. A female nurse from the Arab world is adverse to treat men patients and do not want to work night shifts.

The ministry was obliged to close the nursing school and shift it to the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training because the standards of applicants was very low. The new system of the school will be only to accept girls who complete the Secondary School Certificate examination. They will study for two more years before graduation, he said.

He said that 45 per cent of the population in Kuwait is under 15 years of age and consequently, medical services should be less than any country in the world. The reverse is the case, he said.

Naqeeb added that the ministry instituted a new system to organise work at the health centres such as charging for services to visitors coming to Kuwait.

Naqeeb said that the ministry is working to establish the Faculty of Dentistry at Kuwait University. The next step will be the establishment of Faculty of Pharmacy. The ministry will build five dentistry centres in all health areas, he said.

Nouri calls for proper educational policies

KUWAIT'S Minister of Education Anwar Abdullah Al Nouri called for the setting up of proper educational policies to achieve the comprehensive goals of public education.

He told a seminar organised by the Faculty of Education at Kuwait University on the theme of "General Education - the current situation - aspirations and future hopes" that this requires an effective educational administration which should have the flexibility and ability to translate adopted educational objectives into practical plans.

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Ophthalmologists discuss changing pattern of blindness in Kuwait

By Lima Al Khalafawi

KUWAIT'S Second International Symposium on Ophthalmology which began on Feb 4 is intended to provide a forum for the exchange of information and seeks to find solutions to problems related to this field.

Dr Sami Al Rabbia, the symposium president and consultant ophthalmologist said that during the symposium doctors discussed ocular trauma, particular groups more susceptible to the disease, the severity of injuries according to age group and causative factors.

Discussions centred around changing patterns of blindness in Kuwait. Prior to 1967, most of the cases were attributed to infections. In the present generation it is due to congenital factors or hereditary factors. Other topics discussed were bleeding inside the eye and different cases of lid laceration along with corrective methods, the official said.

He added that common eye diseases in Kuwait, the Gulf area and Arab countries are infection, trachoma, microbial infection, cataract, glaucoma and other hereditary diseases.

Pain, redness, excess watering, squinting and poor vision specially noticed among students are all symptoms of eye diseases. If babies or children develop eye problems, parents should not provide any medication on their own, but promptly take them to the doctor, the official said.

Contact lenses Dr Sayed Sherif, head of the Ophthalmology Department in Kuwait told the Arab Times that the department receives about 40 to 50 complicated cases each month. Problems of external eye diseases affecting the lids and cornea make surgery difficult in Kuwait. European patients on the contrary are relatively easy as they did not have these additional problems, Sherif said.

An ophthalmologist at Ibn Sina Hospital Dr Asif M. Ali told the Arab Times that they began a contact lens clinic in Ibn Sina Hospital in January 1987.

He added that during his talk on Feb 4 regarding contact lenses, he explained their complications.

He added that there is a contact lens clinic every Monday and people who have problems can attend.

The symposium will continue until Feb 7.



Anwar Abdullah Al Nouri

development coincided with a quantitative one in the field of educational services.

He disclosed that there were 606 schools in Kuwait with 370,927 students of different stages. About 55 per cent are Kuwaitis. He added that there were about 27,815 teachers of which about 63 per cent are Kuwaitis.

An Amiri decree forming the Higher Committee for re-evaluation and supervising the educational system had been issued in 1985, and the committee had recruited a number of

experts from international institutions to achieve its objectives. The committee had submitted its final report in 1987 which constituted the first comprehensive attempts for the re-evaluating of the country's educational system.

Dr Abdul Rahman Al Ahmed, the dean of the Faculty of Education was quoted as saying that the educational issue has gripped the mind of the country's officials in general and political leadership in particular.

He further said, in 1955 an Arab delegation had been invited to study the general education position in Kuwait and had submitted its report in this respect in the same year.

He added, in 1985 the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences had submitted its report aimed at developing the educational system. All these attempts had been crowned by the report submitted by the Higher Committee for the re-evaluation and supervision of the educational system in 1987.

He said the education officials in Kuwait were realising the importance of education in forming the country's future.

He added that the 1970s had witnessed significant development towards modernising the educational process.

He said this qualitative development coincided with a quantitative one in the field of educational services.

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Bahrain possesses expertise to cure preventable eye diseases, says ophthalmologist

BAHRAIN boasts of some of the best technologies and expertise to cure all forms of preventable eye diseases among its population, according to a leading ophthalmologist in the island.

Major causes of blindness such as trachoma have been completely eradicated in the country with the help of increasing public health education campaigns and advanced equipment among the best in the world. Surgery on almost all major and minor eye ailments with the exception of most advanced cases, can be performed in the island.

Thanks to support given by the government of Bahrain and the availability of highly qualified ophthalmologists, Bahrain ranks among the countries in the Arab world with the smallest number of people afflicted with preventable eye diseases.

In an interview with the Arab Times, Dr Tarik Ghosh, consultant ophthalmologist at the International Hospital, spoke about the preventive aspect of ophthalmology in the Gulf in general and Bahrain in particular.

According to Dr Ghosh, although the basic theme of preventive ophthalmology is the same everywhere there are some differences in the region such as nutritional deficiency induced blindness. He cited climatic factors, old age and diet as major causes responsible for prevalence of certain eye diseases in the area.

He stated involutional cataract (senile cataract) as the commonest preventable cause of blindness in the Gulf, followed by refractive errors, corneal opacities due to diseases like trachoma, bacterial and viral corneal ulcers, uncontrolled or untreated glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.

Climate "Dry and dusty Arabian climate lead to diseases like trachoma and cataract. Infra-red and ultra-violet sunlight can also damage eyesight considerably. Therefore it is advisable not to spend too much time out in the sun. The eye is our window to the world. It is essential to clean and protect the eyes at all times. Due to ignorance and lack of hygiene we expose it to external particles like dust," said Dr Ghosh.

He stressed that a balanced diet, particularly rich in vitamins A and B, is imperative for healthy eyesight.

"In South East Asia, where the staple diet is mainly rice keratomalacia is a common eye disease. But we don't have any such problem in the Gulf where this disease is rare. Fortunately there is proper nourishment here."

Blindness caused by cataract is generally related to advanced age and lack of proper care, according to Dr Ghosh. "This is a normal process. As we grow older our eyesight gets weaker. People around 50-60 age group are prone to cataract. However, we must take extra care of our eyesight at this stage."

Campaign According to official reports 75 per cent of all cases of blindness are preventable by proper health education and early treatment. About one-and-a-half per cent of the population of the Gulf are blind.

In September 1987, a major campaign called "Save Your Sight" was launched in Bahrain with the support and collaboration of the Ministry of Health, World Blind Union and UNICEF.

According to Dr Ghosh the aim of the campaign is to prevent onset of blindness and to introduce good primary eye care among the population of Bahrain in particular and of the other Gulf countries in general. As part of the health education programme a booklet and tape-slide programme called "Save Your Sight" has been published in Arabic and English for public awareness.

A sum of \$20,000 was donated towards the campaign by Sheikh Abdullah bin Ahmad Al Khalifa, President of World Blind Union. Dr Ghosh said that "Save Your Sight" campaign has already made considerable impact on the population in a short time.

"We have ensured that all general practitioners in the hospitals, students in both private and government schools and social bodies are aware of our programme with the help of lectures and video shows. The response has been very encouraging so far and the government of Bahrain has shown very good support in our endeavours."

Major hospitals like the Salmaniya Medical Centre, American Mission and the International Hospital are now equipped with the latest and most advanced "State of the Art Technology" which includes computerised machines to check eyesight after surgery. Dr Ghosh cited King Faisal Eye Hospital in Saudi Arabia as one of the world's leading eye hospitals.

Meanwhile, two more doctors are to soon join Bahrain's growing number of top ophthalmologists.

Kuwait waste plant plans have been drawn up: Dualj

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): Chairman of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources Sheikh Ibrahim Dnaji Al Sabah has said that the general specification and needs for the establishment of a waste plant in the country have been drawn up.

Interviewed by a local daily, Sheikh Ibrahim said the plan is being overseen by a cabinet assigned committee which comprises of the Kuwait Investment Authority, Industrial Investments Company and Kuwait's Municipality in addition to the agriculture authority.

He noted that a special company will be found for this factory and the compost products will be transferred to the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs to use it for agricultural needs.

The official noted that in the Seventies a waste plant was established in Kuwait with a processing capacity of 100 tons per day, noting that this volume represents only 3 per cent of the current amount of waste. He added that there is currently 2,700 tons of waste.

He went on to say that the quantity of waste is expected to reach four tons per day by the end of this century with a production capacity of 30 tons of fertilisers per day based on 300 working days in the year.

He said that Kuwait's need for compost for fertilisation purposes is estimated at 130,000 tons per year.

Yugoslav President leaves Iraq after brief visit

BAGHDAD, Feb 5, (KUNA): Yugoslav President Raif Dizdarevic left here yesterday at the conclusion of a brief state visit to Iraq.

He was seen off by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and other senior officials. The two heads of state had two rounds of official talks as members of both countries' delegations held side meetings.

Dizdarevic, in statements carried by the Iraq News Agency following the first round of summit talks, described President Saddam as a "renowned President and good friend."

He said that his country's relations with Iraq was progressing positively and described co-operation between them as unlimited.

The Yugoslav President, meanwhile, affirmed that any settlement to the Palestine cause should take into consideration the Palestinian people's rights of self-determination and statehood.

"We have to use all methods in this direction whether at the level of bilateral relations, the Non-Aligned Movement or the United Nations," Dizdarevic elaborated.

Co-ordination INA reported that Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Tarek Aziz had a meeting earlier this evening with Yugoslav Foreign Minister Budimir Luncar, who is accompanying the President.

It said that they discussed bilateral relations and means of expanding them in all spheres and stressed the need for co-ordinating joint stands.

They also reviewed latest developments in the execution of the Security Council Resolution 598 on the Iraq-Iran war and the situation in the Gulf region as well as issues of common interest.

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Indian envoy meets Shaheen

AN Indian Embassy press release said that the Ambassador of India to Kuwait Nagendra Natha Jha yesterday met with Majed Al Shaheen Under Secretary, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the latter's office.

During the meeting, means of further strengthening co-operation between the two countries and other matters of mutual interest were discussed.

Rashed, Rqobah tour Doha water desalination plant

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Rashed Abdul Aziz Al Rashed accompanied by Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Hmoud Abdullah Al Rqobah yesterday toured the Doha water desalination station.

The ministers were briefed by officials and technicians of the station on means of securing fresh water through using the

reverse osmosis method that was developed by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research to reduce the cost of production by two thirds.

Cheaper methods Rashed said that KISR in co-operation with the Electricity and Water Ministry and other experienced parties in this field have succeeded in reaching a new

method that reduces cost of production through decreasing use of energy in the desalination process.

Dr Rqobah, for his part, said that his ministry is always interested in co-operation with KISR to develop cheaper methods of securing fresh water supplies.

He noted that topping the ministry's priorities was reducing

cost and percentage of chemicals in the process, noting that using the new method will bring down cost of producing one cubic metre of water through reverse osmosis from 150 fils to 58 fils.

The ministers, accompanied by the KISR director and other officials, made a field visit to the station's various sections during which they inspected equipment used in the desalination process.

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INDIAN VIDEO ROUNDUP

A tale of two families

By Fathima Ahmed

"OH GOD! Shower your blessings on this family and let us prosper forever," prays the mother in a family social. The line is a cue for a film director to get into the act of activating your tearbuds. K. Ravi Shankar falls for the ploy in Gharana and sets the ball rolling... at full speed.

But one must give credit to script-writer Gyan Dev Agnihotri for resisting the temptation of going overboard with the details of the family's pendency. The Gharana unit is rather dignified, even in poverty, and doesn't indulge in self-pity or recrimination. They are also afflicted by the "bahu" (daughter-in-law) syndrome. A "daughter-in-law" (Jaya Prada) does come into the picture but she plays the saviour not the destroyer.

The film, as you may have guessed, is about a wealthy family's downfall, engineered



Anupam Kher

by a creepy jeweller. The rest of the theme deals with how one son (Govinda) redeems his family's honour and the other (Rishi Kapoor) supports them. The script provides romance, misunderstanding, intrigue, mystery and in keeping in line with current trends it has a crusading journalist (Meenakshi Seshadri) exposing the villain (Prem Chopra) for all



Rishi Kapoor

the wrong reasons. The dialogue is predictable. For example: "I lived to see my children go hungry," says mother Tanuja. The sequences follow the routine path. For instance, the daughter's in-laws "demand high dowry" after the family faces financial downfall, an appropriate moment for the father to fall ill; and for the son to sacrifice his love to pay for the sister's marriage and so on and so forth. The element of revenge hovers over the theme taxing your patience, until the moment when all ends well and they live happily ever after.



Rakhee

If Gharana is an average family saga, the tale of the other family of Subhash Ghai's Ram Lakhan is taut, dramatic and suspenseful. Ghai makes no bones about using revenge to sustain interest; nor does he shy from the usual ploy of sibling rivalry.

Ghai injects vigour into a repetitive theme inspired by several earlier films about a woman's obsession to see that justice is done. But it differs in presentation. Ghai skillfully uses picturesque backdrops. Laxmikant-Pyarelal's music and high drama to play the

revenge game. You smell the plot a mile away — with Ram (Jackie Shroff) and Lakhan (Anil Kapoor) as the two jewels in the mother's (Rakhee) crown, no one can miss the point. Yet, Ghai sustains interest as viewers wait for the day of reckoning.

The dramatic moments are offset by comedy in the form of a tight-fisted grocer, played tongue-in-cheek by Anupam Kher, who is ably supported by an exuberant Anil Kapoor. Rakhee excels in one sequence where she learns of a plot to foil her plans. Jackie is restrained; Dimple Kapadia and Madhuri Dixit add a touch of glamour.

No amount of glamour could rescue Padmini Kohlapure's Dar Pech from falling into the pits. The film is an ill-conceived haphazard attempt at filmmaking. The theme, if there is one, is beyond comprehension. Jeetendra's "double-role" fools none but the filmmakers. The film leaves such a bad taste in the mouth that the less said the better.

The above films are by courtesy of Athari Video, Main St. Farwaniya, Tel: 4712900 and Falcon Video, Abbasiya.

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

KTV 1

MORNING

9.00 Holy Quran
9.10 Good Morning
9.15 Cartoon serial
9.45 World News via Satellite
10.00 Abna'a Al Diyah: Arabic serial: Starring: Jamil Awadh, Jubet Awadh, Rubi Al Saffi, Iman Kamel.
10.50 News Summary/Good Morning
11.00 Al Daleel: local Arabic serial: starring Mohammad Al Manea, Ayesha Ibrahim
12.00 Kuwait Al Ams: interview with Al Hajj Nassem Bin Radhan, hosted by Jassim Ghareeb

1.00 News Summary
1.05 Holy Quran/Close-down

EVENING

4.00 Holy Quran
4.15 World News via Satellite
4.45 Cartoon serial
5.15 Mama Anisa and Children
5.45 Ibn Attiya: historical serial: starring Majed Afrouni.

Shafiq Hassan, Marcel Marina
7.00 News Summary
7.30 Atfalna wa Mustakbil: Our Children and their Future
8.30 Good Evening
9.00 News in Arabic
9.50 Al Jawahar: Arabic serial: starring Safa Abul Saud, Salah Saadani, Yusuf Shaban, Mohsina Tawfiq
10.50 Fann wa Fikr: (Art and Philosophy), hosted by Amal Abdullah
12.30 News Summary
12.35 World News via Satellite/ Holy Quran/Close-down

KTV 2

6.00 Holy Quran
6.10 Bionic Six: cartoon serial
6.30 Chocky's Children: based on characters created by John Wyndham
7.00 Roving Report: weekly roundup of world news and views
7.30 Perspective: a documentary, it examines emergency measures to rescue

people caught in fires
8.00 News in English
8.40 A Different World: Denise plays host to her younger sister, Maggie
9.30 Rediscovery of the World: "Waters of the Winds Cape Horn."
10.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents: "Twisted Sister." A group of young girls devise a "bravery test" for all new entrants to their club...with some pretty horrific results.
10.30 French Feature Film
11.30 News Summary/Magazine D'Actualite/ Holy Quran/ Close-down

Please note that programmes and timings are liable to change without notice.

* All entries for the What's On column can be sent by telex (22332) to Events Section or hand delivered daily, except Thursday, from 12 noon to 4 pm, at the Arab Times Office in Shuwaikh. Photographs will also be considered for publication. Phoned-in entries will not be accepted.

WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Ghadir Gallery

Until Feb. 9: "The Orient in their Eyes", a collection of works by a group of Arab and European painters will be shown at the gallery. Open daily from 9 am to 12.30 pm and 4 to 8.30 pm.

Iwan Gallery

Exhibition of lithographs by three 19th century Orientalists. Open from 9 am to 1 pm, 5 to 9 pm, at the gallery located in Zahra Complex, Salmiya.

Kuwait Society for

Formative Arts

Until Feb. 9: The Kuwait Society for Formative Arts will hold the annual general exhibition, displaying art works by Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti plastic artists.

THEATRE

Kuwait Players

Auditions: FEB 5, 7 pm at Messilah Beach Hotel: Kuwait Players will hold auditions for their coming productions. (1) The Great Gatsby, a comedy with music, set in an Indian family adapting to their new life in England; directed by Mike Conden (2) When Did You Last See Your Trousers?, a British farce, directed by Mike Johnston. Indians particularly welcome for the first production. For details ring Malcolm Walker — 5624111 ext. 716.

EXHIBITIONS

Children's Books

of the Year '88: UNTIL FEB 16: An exhibition of British books for children, written by award-winning writers and illustrators, will be held at the British Council, Mansouriya.

The programme is as follows: FILMS: Feb 8 (6 pm): Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day (cartoon); Feb 15 (6 pm): The Amazing Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (cartoons).

STORYTELLING SESSION: A professional storyteller will conduct the sessions. Feb 9/16 (9.30 - 10.30 am) a session for children — aged

seven to 10; (11 am-12 noon) stories for children aged three to six. All are welcome. Free admission. But it is advisable to reserve seats. Tel: 2515512; 2533204; 2533227.

SOCIAL

German-Speaking

Ladies Association

FEB. 5: 10 am. The regular coffee morning for German-speaking ladies will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel. Newcomers are particularly welcome.

KAPILKU

FEB 10 (Friday, 2 pm - 6 pm): The Association of Filipinos in Kuwait, KAPILKU, will hold their first Bayanihan (get-together) at the Church Hall. Free admission and lots of prizes for winners of parlour games and raffle contest. Guest singers will entertain. All Filipinos are welcome. For details contact Sarah Macarimang Tel: 484-3447.

Goan Show

FEB 17 (3.30 pm, IAC): The Goan community will celebrate the Nehru Centenary by presenting three one-act plays. Betic and Dodo, an English play by Gerry Rodrigues, and two Konkani plays Bad Luck (N.G.O.A.) and On Credit (Goan Cultural Society). A variety show will also be presented. For details call 264-4983; 562141.

SPORTS

PSAK Non-pro

bowling league

FEB 10 (Friday): This week's schedule: 8.30 am — San Juan vs Baguio City; Cavite City vs Quezon City; 1.30 am — Mandaluyong vs Valenzuela, Zamboanga City vs Manila; 2.30 — Makati vs Calocan City; Las Pinas vs Farnaque. The tournament has been sponsored by Dollarco Exchange Co and Holiday Inn Hotel.

United Goans Centre

FEB 24: The United Goans Centre will hold their 11th annual league football tournament. The draw will be held on Feb 16. All Kiff-affiliated teams are requested to contact the organisers for registration.

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Mubarak Al Kabir St.

Hawalli and Nagra
Al Haditha Pharmacy
Othman Complex, Bin Khalid St.

Sahnaya and Rumaithiya
Al Nahda Pharmacy
Baghdad St.
Falahed and Ahmadi
Al Itihad Pharmacy
Makkah St, F'heel
New Khaitan
Al Tasamam Pharmacy
Ibn Seereen St.
Rigga
Al Rigga Pharmacy
Rigga
Jahra
Al Noor Pharmacy
Abdul Aziz Nasrullah Bldg.
Matafi St.

CINEMA TODAY

Al Andalus
Youn Mir Youm Helu
(Arabic)
Starring: Faten Hamama,
Mohammad Muneer

Al Sahliya
Al Zalzal (Arabic play)

Drive-In
Bint Min Dahab (Arabic)
Starring: Shireen, Ahmad
Rateb, Mahmood Jundi

Al Firdous
Zameen Aasman (Hindi)
Starring: Sunjay Dutt,
Anita Raj

Fahabed Open-air
Sila (Hindi)
Al Fahabed
Space Balls
Al Jahra
Three Musketeers

Al Hamra
Shaitan Yaghna (Arabic)
Starring: Mahmoud
Yaseen, Bosi
Granada
Cross of Iron
Salaikhhat
Super Girl
Al Jebel
Maan Maryada (Hindi)
Ahmadi Drive-In
Mad Mission (Part 2)

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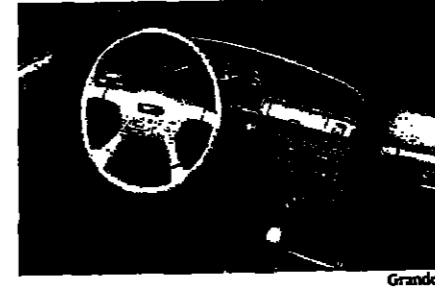
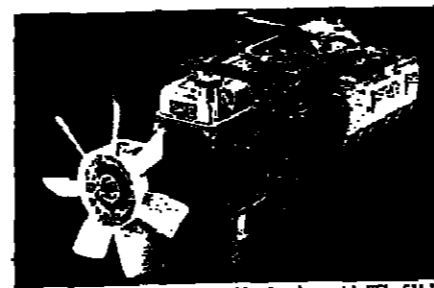


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ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

LET the people know the truth and the country is safe—
Abraham Lincoln, US president (1809-1865).OPINION
Beginning of a
new chapter

HH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister today begins his visit to Baghdad.

The people of Kuwait and the whole of the Gulf and Arab peninsula have been eagerly waiting for this visit to materialise as they realise its importance and know why it comes at this particular time. People are also aware that the success of the visit carries certain implications for them.

During the bitter years of war between Iraq and Iran, Kuwait voluntarily performed its patriotic and national role. This has been fully appreciated and announced without any reservation by the Iraqi leadership. No opportunity was lost to praise the Kuwaiti role.

Thus, it is necessary for this role to be strengthened and as a consequence comes the visit of HH the Crown Prince and Premier — after Iraq emerged victorious and defended its independence and as peace is prevailing.

The Kuwaiti people and the peoples of the region are eagerly looking for Sheikh Saad's visit. They are well aware that the success of the visit will put an end to all types of rumours and plots spread by those who used to adopt divide and rule policy and the policy of lies. Lying continuously, they say, will make some people believe some of the lies.

Some issues are still outstanding between Iraq and Kuwait. Iraq does not hide its desire to end such issues and is aware that some factors still affect it. With all brotherhood and affectionate feelings, Kuwait on the other hand based its position on the fact that it did not want to raise the issues at an inappropriate time. It left for the other side the opportunity to choose a suitable time and place. This position is certainly acknowledged by the Iraqi leadership that never forgets friends and deals with them faithfully.

The visit of HH the Crown Prince and Premier of Kuwait to Baghdad is the appropriate time and place to settle the issues. Iraq is aware of the fact that much talk about it should not be aired. The victorious Iraq and Kuwait, who stood with Iraq, know that the Arab world now is governed by more logical ideas for co-operation.

Whatever borders may be, it is not the bond that can link the peoples. People through strong relations based upon achieving the interests of all sides can do more than open borders.

Through good neighbourly relations, people can overcome borders between them. Obviously, the demarcation of borders between Iraq and Kuwait will certainly silence to all those who are used to fish in troubled waters.

The visit of Sheikh Saad to Baghdad comes at a time when the people of this region are convinced that it comes after efforts for its success were made and that its success is pre-arranged.

Thus, the visit is indeed the beginning of a new chapter in relations between Iraq and Kuwait — the country at war and the country that supported, respectively.

Ahmed Al Jarallah

Malta treads a
tricky path

By Barry Moody

VALLETTA, (Reuters): Malta is performing a delicate balancing act between its commitment to a European identity and the constraints of its geographic position only 200 miles from Libya.

The 20-month-old government of Prime Minister Edward Fenech Adami has moved quickly to distance itself from the pro-Libyan image of the Labour Party which ruled Malta for 16 years until 1987 and whose policies sometimes hurt relations with the United States.

But at the same time it is emphasising its European identity — it plans to apply for membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) — the small island nation has made clear that it will not give up its commercial ties to Libya, one of the few countries with which it has a favourable trade balance.

Fenech Adami told Reuters in an interview that the previous government was seen as subservient to Libya while his administration wanted a correct relationship. "Any undue Libyan influence is non-existent in Malta," he said.

Stupid
But he said it would be "stupid" for Malta to deny its Mediterranean position or its proximity to Libya and the rest of North Africa.

"Our foreign policy is extremely clear. Malta is Western oriented. Malta is democracy...that is no reason why we should not also have a good working relationship with all neighbouring countries," he said.

Diplomats in Valletta say Fenech Adami's efforts to re-establish Malta's pro-Western credentials have involved delicate diplomacy, especially at the time of the shooting down of two Libyan MIGs by US Navy fighters earlier this month, which

caused deep concern here.

"This government believes a policy of intimidation of Libya is counterproductive. It thinks if Libya is cornered it becomes more dangerous," one Western diplomat said.

Malta does not believe in this kind of action but does not want to say so strongly for fear of ruining its new pro-Western image and the way it has distanced itself from Libya. It cannot send the wrong signals and waste 18 months' work," the diplomat said.

Stance

In an address to diplomats earlier this month Fenech Adami was typically careful to display an even-handed stance.

In a clear reference to the shooting down of the MIGs and US allegations that Libya is building a chemical warfare plant, the prime minister said Malta strongly opposed threats or use of force to resolve conflicts.

But he added: "We do not easily accept as true, accusations levelled by one country against another. Nevertheless we understand and share the apprehensiveness of any country when it knows about or even suspects the existence of sources of danger, especially nearby."

Malta's need to maintain a good relations with Libya is based not only on geographic but also on economic factors.

More than 500 Maltese work in Libya while Libyan companies are big employers in Malta itself. Up to 10 per cent of the island's work force is estimated to be employed by Libya.

Seventy per cent of Malta's trade is with the EEC but imports far outweigh exports. In contrast, there is a healthy surplus with Tripoli.

Western diplomats acknowledge that Malta cannot turn completely Westwards, ignoring its geographical location.

Tackling difficult domestic challenges

Egypt looks abroad for success at home

By Jane Friedman

CAIRO: Egypt is counting on foreign policy successes to shore up support for its government at home and abroad as it tackles difficult domestic challenges.

The dramatic diplomatic achievement in December of getting the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organization to talk to each other has boosted the standing of President Hosni Mubarak. And any future Arab Summit will consider reinstating Egypt in the Arab League. Egypt was expelled 10 years ago following its peace treaty with Israel.

But President Mubarak will have to draw on all the added support he can muster to deal effectively with the deteriorating economic situation and the challenges posed by Islamic fundamentalists.

"The whole economic situation is so precarious," says Mohamed Sayed Ahmed, a leading political analyst. "It's Egypt's Achilles heel."

Oil revenues have plummeted. In fiscal year 1987-88, Egypt earned only \$650 million from oil sales — one-quarter of the total in 1985. Government outlays for

subsidized goods, around \$1 billion, have not decreased. The budget deficit, which was supposed to shrink by 2 per cent a year under an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is thought to have grown to about 18 per cent of gross domestic product. Inflation is said by foreign analysts to be around 25 per cent a year.

Debt

By July 1989, \$2.8 billion of Egypt's staggering \$46 billion in foreign debt will come due. The largest portion is owed to the US. Cairo is now in arrears by about \$250 million, of a total US military debt of \$5 billion.

Egypt must resume making monthly payments to the US by July. Otherwise, the "Brooke amendment" will take effect. It halts all aid to a country that fails a year behind on payment of military debt. That would cost Egypt \$2.3 billion in annual US aid.

Cairo wants another debt rescheduling agreement with foreign creditors. But first it must reach a deal with the IMF.

An IMF delegation, during several visits to Cairo, advocated raising interest rates and prices on subsidized staples to inter-

national levels over a five-year period. It also wanted Egypt to end the artificial currency rate used to calculate the value of imports.

But that would risk street unrest among the 52 million Egyptians, most of whom earn a subsistence living. Per capita income is about \$500 per year, and purchasing power is declining.

Egypt's counteroffer, to implement reform at a slower pace, was unacceptable to the Fund. Talks broke down in September, but are due to resume this month.

"A new IMF team may have to be appointed," a European diplomat says. "Both sides came to a point where they no longer trusted each other."

Aid

Egypt had hoped for an infusion of Arab aid, but it did not materialize. So by mid-1989, Egypt will no longer be able to avoid an economic reform programme shaped by the IMF.

"Willing or not, Egypt will reach an IMF agreement by April or May," a well-informed European diplomat says.

The results could have an impact on another domestic

trouble spot: Islamic fundamentalists who push for an Islamic state and harass the regime.

"The economic factor is the strongest tool of the Islamic fundamentalists," Ahmed says. "It creates a strain of frustration they can ride."

Government officials put the number of Islamic extremists at about 3,000. Their tactics are violence and intimidation. They have tried to burn down video rental shops, attacked trucks delivering liquor to stores, and attempted to assassinate former government ministers.

But the number of fundamentalists who identify with the more moderate Muslim Brotherhood, which works within the system to bring about sharia, or Islamic law, is thought to be much larger. There are no accurate figures.

Recently, the government launched a new campaign against Islamic extremists. It waged pitched street battles in two Cairo suburbs against members of radical Islamic Jihad, called Jihadists.

Government-owned newspapers said that the residents of the neighbourhoods had been tyrannized by the Jihadists, and were relieved to be "liberated."

But observers in Cairo are skeptical.

"It's difficult to understand how the Jihadists could acquire such local power with no local support," Ahmed says.

Analysts expected Egypt to continue to use the fundamentalist and economic pressures as tools of its foreign policy. For instance, Cairo will plead with Western allies to be lenient economically because Egypt is playing such an important foreign policy role.

"The Egyptians believe they can sell the idea that their stability is necessary for the region and that the West has to pay for it," Ahmed says.

In fact, Egypt made an important contribution in the Middle East in 1988. Mubarak painstakingly led the PLO's Yasser Arafat down the road of moderation. Last December in Geneva, Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid sat with Arafat as he drafted his press statement to make sure the language met Washington's requirements for opening a dialogue. All during the Iran-Iraq war, Egypt weighed in on the side of Iraq, the West's favourite.

Informed sources say Egypt

will be rewarded this year by an invitation to rejoin the Arab League. These sources say that Syria recently dropped its opposition to Egypt's membership.

"The Syrians are dead afraid the Iraqis will turn against them," Ahmed says, "so they can't afford to have Egypt on their back."

A Western diplomat, speaking of Syria, adds: "They can't fight on all fronts."

According to knowledgeable sources here, the Syrians agreed not to oppose Egypt's return to the Arab League in exchange for cash aid from Saudi Arabia and a promise from Iraq to discontinue support for Syria's Christian foes in Lebanon.

Continuing control over Lebanon was more important to President Hafez Assad than keeping Egypt frozen out of the League. The Saudis apparently brokered the accord, but sources in Cairo say no date has been set for the next Arab summit conference.

"The effort by Egypt proved that perseverance and moderation pay," says Tahsin Bashir, a prominent foreign policy adviser of the US-PLO dialogue.

The Christian Science Monitor.

IF WE LEGALIZE DRUGS, WE TAKE ALL THE MESSINESS OUT OF IT



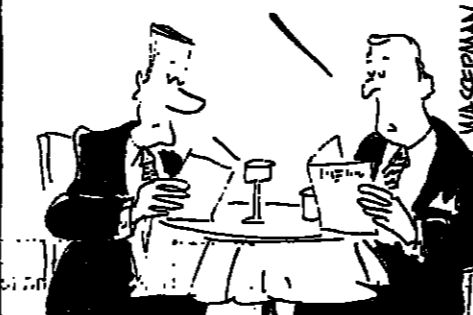
ADDICTS WON'T HAVE TO ROB AND KILL TO SUPPORT THEIR HABITS



INCREASED USE MAY RAISE DEATHS IN THE UNDERCLASS, BUT WE CAN IGNORE THAT



I THOUGHT THAT'S WHY WE'RE IGNORING AIDS

Get rid of the scourge,
US anti-drug fighter told

By Carolyn Skorneck

WASHINGTON, (AP): William Bennett has marching orders from US President George Bush to get rid of the drug "scourge," but it will be up to the nation's first commander in the anti-drug war to decide how to use his newly created powers.

Some law enforcement agencies that opposed creation of an anti-drug chief question whether Bennett — nominated by Bush to fill the new post — will be able to do anything more than try to reduce demand for illicit narcotics. And they say their drug-control efforts won't change just because Congress created the new job, formally called Director of National Drug Control Policy.

Pulpit
"My sense is that Bill Bennett and his mission will be to concentrate on... reduction of demand," Attorney General Dick Thornburgh said recently. "We in law enforcement have our job to do, no matter who's up top, and we're going to do it."

A Bush administration official, who spoke on condition that he not be identified, said that

Bennett would keep close tabs on law enforcement efforts, including those by the FBI and the US Drug Enforcement Agency.

But he said he also expects Bennett to use the job as a "bully pulpit" to encourage people to stop using drugs — just as he did during his 3-1/2 years as education secretary under former President Ronald Reagan.

Bennett declined to discuss his plans for the job until his confirmation hearings, aide John Walters said.

Co-operation

An official involved in coordinating drug-control efforts in the past said Congress didn't give the new anti-drug chief much power. "He gets to advise on a lot of things and recommend a lot of things, but that's about it."

That is disputed by Sen. Joseph Biden, Democrat from the state of Delaware, who fought for eight years to create a cabinet-rank official to coordinate the nation's efforts to stop drug smuggling and drug use. The legislation creating the job was passed by Congress and signed into law by Reagan late last year.

The legislation's fine print requires each agency to write down, in detail, why it doesn't want to go along with any plan or budgetary decision of the anti-drug chief, Biden said.

Faced with the possibility that the agencies could be singled out for lack of co-operation, "they'll sign on," Biden said.

"I'm confident Bennett can be a strong director," Biden said. Biden noted that during his tenure as education secretary, Bennett was "strong-willed and not afraid to butt heads with the bureaucracy. He's not a guy worried about being criticized.... that's a necessary ingredient for this job."

He added, however, that Bennett "has no demonstrable experience on either the law enforcement side of the drug problem nor to the best of my knowledge any detailed view on the education/revention side. I think the key will be who he picks as his top aides."

Deficit

Bush raised the drug issue to the fore when, in his inaugural address, he said, "this scourge will stop."

But he also said the "overriding problem of the (budget) deficit" would make it difficult to increase spending on law-enforcement efforts, so the main thrust of the drug war would be education.

And Bush also decided not to include Bennett in his cabinet where, symbolically at least, he would have been on equal footing with heads of departments involved in the drug war efforts.

At his first presidential news conference, Bush defended his decision to exclude Bennett from the cabinet.

"The reason he isn't in the cabinet is that I've tried to reduce down the numbers of full cabinet members," Bush told reporters on Friday. "And I think that Bill Bennett's time is best spent not worrying about agricultural subsidies but concentrating on drugs."

Bush said he would make clear to the cabinet secretaries that he was insisting on their co-operation with Bennett.

FBI director William Sessions, when asked how Bennett and the FBI would work together, did not even address the role Bennett would play.

By Susan Linnee

LISBON, (AP): The Portuguese, who sent a generation of young men to fight in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, finally are beginning to take a hard look at the war years.

In the turbulent times following the April 1974 coup that ended Portugal's 48-year dictatorship and brought independence to its African colonies, the memory of the conflicts was submerged.

Now, the arrival of relative political stability has paved way for sometimes-painful introspection about the conflicts that lasted from 1961 to 1975. And like Americans who have belatedly been examining their involvement in the Vietnam War, films, theatre and literature have been instrumental in spotlighting the African conflicts for Portugal's 10 million residents.

Jonas Botelho, a 38-year-old graphic illustration and independent filmmaker among the first to broach the subject, has 1985's "Um Jeito de Fugir" (A Way to Escape), which was also shown on television and was later televised.

Sadness

Told in the present through a series of flashbacks by relatives of a Portuguese soldier who died in Angola in 1975, the film is full of longing and sadness.

"To die in Africa, and then for nothing," says the dead man's father.

The victim's brother uneasily averts his eyes from the camera and says: "I don't like to mention that my brother died in the war in Africa. It makes people uncomfortable. They look at the floor."

In another scene, a soldier reads by lamplight from a geography book to a group of African children. "The Minho, the Douro, the Tago," he drones, citing the names of Portuguese rivers they will never see.

Half a dozen publishers initially rejected the two-volume book "Os Anos da Guerra" (The War Years), saying there was no interest in the subject. Circulo de Leitores and Dom Quixote press finally undertook the project and released it six months ago.

Since then, sales have surpassed

Portugal takes a look
at its 'Vietnam'

50,000 copies — a record for a collection of essays, poetry, short stories and excerpts from novels in a country with Western Europe's highest literacy rate. The normal press run for a novel here is around 2,500 copies; anything that hits 10,000 is considered a best-seller.

Conscription

For editors Joao de Melo, 40, and Joaquim Vieira, 38, the book's period spans their generation, which faced obligatory conscription or emigration to avoid the military draft. An estimated 800,000 Portuguese saw service in the African wars.

Melo, a novelist who spent three years as a medic in Angola, calls it Portugal's "own little Vietnam" and says the generation that followed his doesn't know "how lucky they are not to have been under constant threat of mobilization."

"Some will say we took a long time to realize the war was over," says Vieira, 46, a poet and playwright. Themuda Barata wrote in the introduction to a Defence Ministry report released six months ago that was the first on the 1961-75 conflict. "Others will say it comes much too soon."

Discuss

The report says 8,920 Portuguese soldiers died and another 23,233 were wounded during the wars for independence in three of Portugal's five African colonies. The island colonies of Cape Verde and Sao Tome y Principe achieved independence peacefully.

There are no accurate figures available on the number of Africans killed or wounded in the conflicts.

Retired Gen. Altino Pinto Magalhães, who served two separate stints in Angola and now heads the 53,000-member Portuguese War Veterans League, says it is good to discuss the war at last.

In the beginning, the Portuguese supported the war out of a sense of solidarity and patriotism," Magalhães said. "But it was long, 14 years, and then there was no victory."

Maj. Manuel Lopes Dias, a spokesman for the Association of Armed Forces Disabled (ADFA), says the organisation's 12,000 members suffer from both physical and psychological problems. He said some of the difficulties have manifested themselves only recently, and that many have been aggravated by a painfully slow and complicated Portuguese bureaucracy.

Although "war novels" came out during the period that began on Feb. 4, 1961, when African guerrillas attacked a Portuguese police station in Luanda, Angola, the theme of the colonial wars' effects on Portuguese society is relatively recent.

Media coverage during the conflicts was limited by complete press censorship and consisted mainly of positive reports with only occasional mention of losses. The influence of some troops who went to battle.

Lidia Jorge, one of Portugal's leading novelists, says she wrote "A Costa dos Murmúrios" (The Coast of Whispers), set in wartime Mozambique, because "those who don't want to confront the pain of this memory created a super-reality, a greater temporal distance than the time that has actually passed."

Released last year, the book has sold some 10,000 copies.

Fernando da Costa's play "Um Jeep de Segunda Mão" (A Second-hand Jeep) was one of the first public presentations to deal with the wars. It drew full houses when performed during the 1985-86 season in a small theatre.

Portuguese state television (RTP) has never devoted a documentary to the wars, but did air an hour-long dramatization late last year of Luis Felipe Costa's short story "Era Uma Vez Um Alferes" (Once There Was a Corporal). In it, a drafted steps on what he believes is a land mine, is exhorted by his captain to be courageous and dies of a heart attack from the stress. The "mine" turns out to be a metal clicker.

Walesa throws down gauntlet

By Andrew Tarnowski

WARSAW, (Reuters): Lech Walesa has thrown down the gauntlet to Poland's communist rulers, saying the talks between the government and the opposition must start dismantling communist power monopolies.

Introducing pluralism, Walesa told a packed news conference on Saturday, was the only way the long-delayed "round table" talks could rescue Poland from crisis.

The talks start on Feb. 6. The government hopes for a coalition with the opposition able to pull Poland back from the brink of economic, social and political disaster.

But Walesa made clear that after monopolising power for 45 years the communists must pay a price for opposition help, and strikes and unrest could erupt at any time.

"We've said many times that the crisis is caused by the monopolies — the monopoly of the (Communist) Party, the monopoly of one (communist-led) union, (state) economic monopoly and many others," Walesa said.

He believes that introducing pluralism — to unleash individual and group enterprise in public life — is the oxygen

Poland needs after more than four decades of communism.

Solidarity's aim at the talks, Walesa said, was an accord that would "change the economic, social and political monopoly and give others the possibility of pluralistic existence in these fields and of competing for different programmes."

He said talks could last six weeks. They will debate political and economic reform, union pluralism, the right of association, workers' self-management, media freedoms, judicial reform, agriculture and farmers unions and the mining industry.

Agreement

The government has already said it wants reforms. It has relaxed press controls, promising limited union pluralism and more freedom to form associations and political clubs. Recent legislation has encouraged private business as part of a major economic reform programme.

But Solidarity sees all this as official handouts that barely dent the communist power monopoly.

It wants to establish freedom as a right — including people's right to have a real say at every level in how Poland is run.

Top of the agenda at the talks are the terms of Solidarity's legislation after seven years'

suppression — a decision already approved in principle by the Communist Party.

Solidarity sources say Walesa last week won virtual official agreement, at secret talks with Interior Minister Czeslaw Kiszczak, for the legalisation to take place before early parliamentary elections in May or June.

The government wants to seal an accord with the opposition by working out a joint platform for the elections. It is expected to offer a bloc of seats and several cabinet posts to clinch what it calls a "broad pro-reform coalition."

Solidarity is wary of any deal that would co-opt it into the ruling establishment as a prop for the communists.

Electoral reform will be a key round table topic but Walesa indicated that the time was not ripe for a full democratic breakthrough and said Solidarity would not fight a major battle over the issue.

A senior Solidarity official who asked not to be identified also indicated that the opposition was unlikely to agree to a coalition or a joint electoral platform with the government.

"It wouldn't say we could form a coalition but perhaps some kind of a platform on which we can both agree about the basic issues for the country and basic reforms," he said.

Give workers more control, says study

Heart-attack risks for high-strain workers

By Malcolm Ritter

NEW YORK, (AP) — Waiters, cashiers and others with little control over demanding jobs face an added heart attack risk about as big as that from smoking or high cholesterol, a study of nearly 5,000 men suggests.

The study found that male workers in the top 10 per cent for such "job strain" had 3.8 to 4.8 times the heart attack risk of men in the bottom 10 per cent.

A second analysis found that men in the top 20 per cent for job strain, a list that included cooks, gas station attendants and firemen, had 2.5 to 3.3 times the risk of the rest of the workers studied.

Analysis

Each analysis gave two numbers because it was performed on two groups of men. The "true" answer probably lies about halfway in between, said Robert Karasek, associate professor in the industrial and systems engineering department at the University of Southern California.

Employers may be able to redesign high-strain jobs to lower heart attack risk and improve productivity, said Karasek.

The results are impressive,

said David Krantz, professor of medical psychology at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland.

Job strain was defined as the result of having too little control over one's work to deal satisfactorily with its psychological demands, such as having to work quickly and facing heavy workloads.

Executives were not considered under heavy strain because they have control to deal with demands, Karasek said.

The study was based on heart attacks as reported by men in two federal surveys. Too few women with heart attacks appeared in those surveys for a meaningful analysis of them, Karasek said.

The health examination survey done in 1960-61, found 39 heart attacks among 2,409 employed men. The health and nutrition examination survey, done from 1971 to 1975, uncovered 30 heart attacks among 2,424 employed men.

To assess job characteristics for all, 4,833 men, researchers used federal studies of the conditions faced by workers of various kinds of jobs. Measurements for various job traits, such as control over the

work, were computed for 211 occupations.

These measurements were then adjusted for each worker based on his age, race, education, geographic region, and whether or not he was self-employed or worked in a city.

Comparison

The comparison of heart attacks in men with the most versus the least job strain took into account the heart attack risk factors of age, race, cigarette use, education, blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Jobs in the top 10 per cent for strain included cashiers and waiters, while those in the bottom 10 per cent included foresters, natural scientists and civil engineers.

The other analysis, of men in the top 20 per cent versus the other 80 per cent, took into account only the worker ages, which Karasek said was the most important influence on heart attack risk.

Job strain appeared to account for between a fourth and a third of heart attacks in an analysis that took only age into account. Karasek said the results were similar when the other risk factors also were considered.

The study does not prove that job strain raises the risk of heart attacks, Karasek said, but the idea is supported by other research.

In the new study, researchers did not know whether workers were in their reported jobs when the heart attack occurred. But it is unlikely that a worker would have a heart attack in a low-strain job and later move into a high-strain one, Karasek said.

It may take 10 to 15 years of high job strain before a heart attack would occur, he said.

Giving workers more control has long been advocated to increase productivity, he said. It may also reduce job strain, along with letting workers use under-utilised skills and making their jobs platforms for learning new skills, he said.

Karasek said overall job strain probably includes factors the study overlooked, such as job insecurity and psychological support from other people.

Krantz said the "very promising" job strain hypothesis should be tested by research that measures each worker's job strain directly, follows him over time and takes the various risk factors into account.



The best source of nutrients is food. It's a good idea to eat fish two or three times a week to supply protein and minerals as well as n-3 fatty acids.

How good health is a fishy issue

Various fish oils and evening primrose oil contain essential fatty acids (EFAs), reputed to have a wonderful effect on general health.

EVENING primrose oil and various fish oils are among the flood of dietary supplements in health food shops which contain essential fatty acids (EFAs). Not only do these products contain EFAs reputedly have a wonderful effect on general health but also some claim to relieve specific conditions as disparate as rheumatism, eczema, multiple sclerosis, and premenstrual tension, as well as heart disease.

All fats, whether vegetable or animal, contain different mixtures of fatty acids. Fatty acids are chains of carbon atoms attached to hydrogen atoms.

Fats

Essentially fatty acids are those which cannot be manufactured by the body and must be provided in the diet.

These EFAs form part of the structure of the membranes which surround every cell in the body and are also important in controlling blood clotting. Concentrated in the brain, they play a vital role in the nervous system. Heart disease, strokes and poor

functioning of the brain may be encouraged by a deficiency of EFAs.

All fats contain some EFAs, but the best sources are polyunsaturated fats. Saturated fats compete with the enzymes needed to metabolise EFAs. Animal and other saturated fats (such as palm oil) help cause heart disease and are also low in EFAs. It makes sense to replace these saturated animal fats with polyunsaturated animal fats with EFAs.

How can we put EFAs into our diet? There are many different ones, with different names, but EFAs are grouped in two families — scientifically described as n-6 and n-3. We need about five times as much n-6 as n-3.

EFAs belonging to the n-6 family linoleic acid and gam-

malinolenic acid (found in cod liver oil).

The n-6 family are abundant in plants. Linoleic acid is the main fatty acid in soya, maize and sunflower oils. Evening primrose oil, blackcurrant and borage oil are good sources of gamma-linolenic acid. Soya and rapeseed oil contain both families of EFAs.

The best source of n-3 is fish oils; seaweed is a good source, too, and linseed also contains alpha-linolenic acid from the n-3 family.

Required

Olive oil has a "healthy" reputation because it is low in saturated fats, even though it is low in polyunsaturated fats (and therefore EFAs), too.

Professor Michael Crawford, on the Nuffield Institute of Comparative Medicine, believes that as mammals evolved out of the

sea they failed to adapt to a diet containing smaller amounts of the n-3 family of EFAs.

He believes that we may not be eating enough of these oils — although the amounts required can only be estimated, it is probably about three per cent of total calories.

For lousy eaters a supplement of cod liver oil or evening primrose oil may be a good insurance policy but it is expensive.

The best source of nutrients is food. It's a good idea to eat fish two or three times a week to supply protein and minerals, as well as n-3 fatty acids, and at the same time cut down on animal (saturated) fats. Any polyunsaturated plant oils are good, but soya, linseed, rape, and walnut contain both families of EFAs.

Evening primrose oil can be effective in the treatment of eczema and cod liver oil lowers blood levels of triglyceride, which is involved in the development of heart disease, and it reduces blood clotting.

Testing for night vision problems

TESTING a patient for night vision problems is Dr Paul Cook — professor of laser technology at Brunel University, near London, and president of the British Science and Technology Trust — who is using Laserspec NightVision, the instrument he has designed and developed to diagnose and treat this condition. By stopping and starting a speckle pattern on the screen, in semi-dark conditions, while at the same time holding different lenses to an eye, Professor Cook is discovering whether, and to what degree, she is suffering from low luminance myopia.

Particular

For scientific tests, have revealed that at twilight and/or night, many people, even adults — may be suffering from low luminance myopia, or, if they are already myopic, suffer a further deterioration in their vision. The speckle pattern on Laserspec NightVision screen tells the story — the way a

patient perceives it will lead an ophthalmic optician to detection of the problem and correction with suitable spectacles.

Low luminance myopia can cause particular problems for drivers and pilots — and there are records of drivers mistaking house driveways for road junctions, or, more dangerously, pilots who have thought a motorway was an airport runway. The trouble arises because in some people there is an overall change in the shape of the eye in low light conditions, as the pupil increases in size and the muscles at the sides and the top of the eye adjust the lens. Until now diagnosis has proved impossible as former measuring techniques tended to act as a stimulus, changing the very conditions that the ophthalmist was trying to measure. Laserspec NightVision does not do this and is painless and fast, adding about 15 minutes to the standard eye test carried out by ophthalmists.



A patient is tested for night blindness.

When too much coffee can lead to tranquillisers...

THERE are few pleasanter ways to get a "lift" than to drink a good cup of coffee, but do so in moderation — beware of its sweet smell of excess. As coffee or tea consumption rises, the greater the risk of addiction to caffeine — a constituent of both coffee and tea in varying proportions.

A friend of mine recently went away on business for several weeks, and his wife, who usually drank coffee with him, didn't bother to do so in his absence. "After about four days," she told me, "I had a bout of headaches — until I had another cup."

To Dr Vicky Ripper, clinical psychologist at the Institute of Psychiatry and a pioneer in the study of food and psychological disorders, this is a common phenomenon.

"This woman was no doubt suffering from withdrawal symptoms of caffeine addiction. A human being needs about a litre and a half of liquid a day."

Consuming

People who feel they are becoming addicted should transfer to one of the wide varieties of herbal teas, which contain no caffeine at all, or spa water, which is quite harmless.

My friend's wife in fact moderated her coffee drinking by gradually weakening the brew, then weaning herself on to decaffeinated coffee, which con-

Excess caffeinated coffee can reduce iron and zinc absorption by the body, says a study.

tains only about one-fourth of the caffeine in the untreated product.

But had she continued consuming as much coffee as she had done (and I know of people heedlessly drinking up to 20 cups a day), she could have shortened the odds against heart disease, or triggered migraine; and, if she had been pregnant, had her baby prematurely.

In a newly-published book, *Overcoming Addictions* (Thorsons, £4.99), Janet Pleshette, a writer on nutrition and alternative medicine, delivers a timely warning against the perils of several addictions, including coffee and tea. An intake of 250 mg of caffeine per day, or that contained in between two and five average cups of coffee, depending on individual tolerance (which can vary like alcohol), can be harmful, she says.

Decaffeinated coffee is becoming more and more popular, but it still has to catch up with ordinary coffee.

If many untreated-coffee aficionados find the flavour of

decaffeinated unacceptable — well, they can either moderate their intake of caffeinated or explore the widening range of varieties of decaffeinated.

Excess caffeinated coffee can reduce iron and zinc absorption by the body, and increase the production of stomach acid, so it should be avoided by people with indigestion or ulcers.

In a Norwegian study, patients with high cholesterol who stopped drinking coffee for 10 weeks found that their cholesterol levels went down.

According to a recent article in the *British Medical Journal*, moderate doses of caffeine can lift the spirits and improve intellectual performance, but large ones can produce symptoms indistinguishable from anxiety neurosis, including insomnia, headache, irritability, tremor, nausea and diarrhoea.

Dr Ripper's clinical experience bears this out: she believes that caffeine addiction can damage the nervous system itself. "I reckon that there is about a 95 per cent chance of a patient who is referred to me with an 'anxiety' type of disorder to be suffering from caffeineism."

The risk, she says, is that such people might well go to a doctor with their anxiety, be put on to tranquillisers — and could finish up with a double addiction.

Stitches give way to tissue welding

THE use of stitches to repair diseased or ruptured arteries of the heart may soon be replaced by a new treatment that uses lasers to "weld" tissue together.

Doctors in the Killingbeck Hospital cardiac research unit in Leeds, northern England, have been working with Leeds University on what is described as a unique form of laser welding that combines with the use of special dyes.

A dye made up of a chemical known as chromophores is painted on to the end of the artery with a brush and when the laser is directed at it, the surface will weld or bond with other tissue. The researchers are also investigating the idea of adding other chemicals to the dye which would undergo photochemical reactions to change colour when the right temperature for fusing by laser is reached.

Research unit director Alban Davies believes laser welding of heart tissue can both provide a more accurate seal and reduce the time needed to operate on the patient. It does not result in an inflammatory reaction as stitches do, either.

By Nadine Gautier

DOCTORS give warnings and the effects of smoking on the heart and lungs, as well as the risks of cancer it could cause, are well known. But what is less well known is that, with women, smoking can have serious consequences on their reproductive functions and on the lives of their babies. It takes women who smoke three or four times longer to become pregnant than women who do not smoke.

A few weeks ago, at the Aquitaine Updating Symposium on Human Reproduction, held in Bordeaux in the south-west of France, Dr Jean Cohen, a gynaecologist and obstetrician in Paris, presented an overview of the different studies revealing the risks of sterility in women who smoke. All the studies presented the same results.

The study with the most striking conclusions was carried out in England on 17,000 women. It reveals that after trying for five years, 11 per cent of women who smoke are still not pregnant.

"I had a heavy-smoking patient who had been trying to get pregnant for five years. We had done all the sterility tests and, apparently, everything fun-

Smoking linked to fertility

ctioned normally. One day, I said to her: 'I promise you will have a baby as soon as you stop smoking.' So she stopped smoking and about three months later she was pregnant," says Dr Cohen.

Sterility

Sterility caused by smoking is thus not irreversible, but in what way does smoking have an influence on the fertility of women?

According to Dr Cohen, "It is known that smoking has an effect, but it is not yet known precisely in what way." It was a Japanese doctor, Professor Yoshinaga who demonstrated the mechanisms, after making rats inhale tobacco smoke.

He noted that the number of eggs contained in the ovaries fell proportionally to the amount of tobacco smoke inhaled. That is to say that smoking attacks and destroys the oocytes. He also noted that the amount of progesterone, which is the hormone needed for the implantation of

the fertilised ovum, fell in the same proportion, with the inhalation of tobacco smoke. This results in the egg's being unable to embed itself correctly in the wall of the uterus.

It is also thought that smoking has an effect on the Fallopian tubes which carry the fertilised ovum to the uterus. Smoking appears to weaken the contractions of the Fallopian tubes thereby preventing the embryo from travelling to the uterus. The embryo thus becomes blocked in

the Fallopian tube in which it grows, leading to an extra-uterine pregnancy.

A study by the World Health Organisation confirms these hypotheses, as there are three times as many extra-uterine pregnancies in women who smoke than in those who do not.

The different studies carried out on the damage caused by smoking confirm one another and today, doctors, despairing at the pathological consequences they are faced with, do not hesitate to speak of smoking in general, and particularly in women, as "defying common sense". Indeed, the World Health Organisation speaks of the "extension of smoking in women over the last three decades."



It takes women who smoke, three or four times longer to become pregnant than women who do not smoke.



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Notable people born in the Year of the Snake: (left to right) Benazir Bhutto, John F. Kennedy, and Mahatma Gandhi.

Happy new year for snakes

WELCOME to the Year of the Snake! Come February 6 and lasting till January 26, 1990, the whole planet Earth will be under the influence of the wise and venerable Snake.

Snakes (those born in 1905, 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977 and 1989) are wellbred and strong in sex appeal. The males are by nature sleek and handsome, if a bit showy and snobbish. The women are attractive and irresistible and also often beautiful.

Snakes are well-admired because of their wisdom, gestures of goodwill and gentleness. They also have a subtle sense of humour. They have cultivated tastes, think widely and deeply, and are prone to be self-critical. Snakes have calm, cool exteriors, but don't provoke them or tease them too hard for they can be bad, vicious losers. Still, Snakes are very eager to help. They can overwhelm and strangle their loved ones with their possessive ways through. (They're Snakes, remember!).

Years of the Snake are years of reflection, planning and searching for answers. It is also a good time for shrewd deals, political affairs and coups d'état. A lot of scheming and designing will go on behind the scenes. Trust should not be given immediately this year.

Years of the Snake have never been tranquil, historically speaking. A Snake Year is the strongest negative force in the cycle, following as it does a Dragon Year, which is the strongest positive one. Many disasters which began in the Dragon Year will culminate in the Year of the Snake. Snake Years and Dragon Years are very closely related and what trans-

pire during Snake Years are often results of excesses committed during the benevolent Dragon's reign.

Snake Years are unpredictable and lively. Romances, courtships and scandals are all-systems-go. It's a good year too for the arts and fashion. A lot of learning will occur.

Don't gamble or speculate too much during a Snake Year. Caution and careful study are more the name of the game.

During the Year of the Snake, RATS (1900, 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984) should not take any financial gambles, but instead should take that long overdue trip or undertake further studies. A lot of hard work is also in order this year.

OX people (1901, 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985) meanwhile will be bothered by feelings of insecurity and will wonder about self worth. They are advised to think positively because "this too shall pass".

TIGERS (1902, 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986) must avoid inactivity. They must go places and take a chance. Maybe they'll discover gold in Fort Santiago.

CATS or RABBITS (1903, 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987) have a lot of thinking to do, but the Snake's charm will be theirs and make them lucky. It's a good year on the whole.

DRAGONS (1904, 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988) will thrive in the Year of the Snake. They can continue to shine and have their fun, even if they're no longer on center stage.

HORSES (1906, 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978) must not attempt to leave their spouses or true loves this year even if temp-

tation is strong. Though the Snake favours new romances and flings, they'll be just that — flings. Wait till next year (The Year of the Horse) for major moves.

GOATS or SHEEP (1907, 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979) will have plenty of interesting and amusing things to do. The Snake Year will protect you. MONKEYS (1908, 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980) must work and drive for success and try to be as happy as they can. Overall, the Snake Year is a good year for apes.

ROOSTERS (1909, 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981) may have family or other problems. But they are advised to stick it out, not to run away from the challenges. Soon things will be all right. It just takes perseverance.

DOGS (1910, 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982) must engage in intellectual pursuits this year. Snake Year is, after all, the Year of the Thinker, the Philosopher and the Discoverer.

PIGS (1911, 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983) meanwhile will be lucky in business, not so lucky in love. This year they must learn to say "No" more often. Sometimes they are too nice for their own good.

And as for SNAKES (1905, 1917, 1929, 1941, 1951, 1965, 1977) this is THE year! They can try anything and succeed at it. They'll be lucky in business and in love. They are well-protected.

Other SNAKES are: Mahatma Gandhi, John Paul Getty, John F. Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy, Julie Christie, Grace Kelly, Picasso, Hans Christian Andersen, Mao Tse Tung and Benazir Bhutto.

Centenary spawns interest in suicide of Austrian Crown Prince Rudolf

Mayerling death still shrouded in mystery

By Roland Prinz

MAYERLING, Austria (AP): One hundred years ago, the deaths of Austrian Crown Prince Rudolf and his 17-year-old lover Mary Vetsera shocked Europe. The case remains shrouded in mystery, although theories abound.

The centenary has spawned several new books, an Austro-Hungarian-German television film and renewed discussion of the deaths, now seen as a harbinger of the downfall of the Hapsburg monarchy in 1918.

Rudolf, the 31-year-old heir to the Hapsburg Throne, and the attractive young baroness were found dead in the prince's remote hunting castle in this hamlet some 30 kilometres (19 miles) south of Vienna, early in the morning of Jan. 30, 1889.

Historians say a mutual death pact remains the most likely explanation for the tragedy.

Testimony. But conflicting testimony, hearsay reports and the disappearance of key evidence have given rise to various accounts — some rather bizarre — of what became known as the "Mayerling Tragedy."

Emperor Franz Josef, Rudolf's autocratic, strong-willed father, ordered a ritual news blackout. The death of the impulsive Mary was completely ignored in official records.

The emperor told the Pope in a message that Rudolf committed suicide "in a deranged state of mind," an explanation that permitted the family to hold a Roman Catholic public funeral.

Many historians have tried to shed light on an affair that stunned governments across Europe and provided material for diplomatic gossip for decades thereafter.

Rudolf wrote farewell letters to his wife Stefanie, relatives and friends announcing his forthcoming death. But details about his final days are still unclear.

A recent attempt to exhume Mary's remains in a cemetery at nearby Heiligenkreuz was thwarted at the last minute by relatives, blocking irrefutable evidence about how the baroness died.



Mary Vetsera and her lover Prince Rudolf: they were found dead in the prince's remote hunting castle in Mayerling.

Josef Eros, who administers the cemetery, said both the relatives and the Heiligenkreuz Convent withdrew prior approval of the exhumation after the plan was published in newspapers. They cited "the dignity" of the deceased in reversing their decision.

Published theories about the dramatic events at Rudolf's hunting retreat range from poisoning to jealousy killings to his death in a pistol duel.

Clemens M. Gruber, an author and opera archivist in Vienna, published a startling new hypothesis in a book that was released few days back.

In "The Fateful Days of Mayerling," Gruber claims that Rudolf died in a brawl following a late-night drinking party and a subsequent shootout.

The author theorizes that Mary's uncle and several other noblemen forced their way into Rudolf's room, found Mary scantily dressed and urged the crown prince release her.

However, Gruber asserts, Rudolf pulled a revolver and Mary died in a wild shootout. Then Rudolf, already wounded, attacked one of the intruders after his gun was empty and was dealt a fatal blow with a wine bottle.

Concur. Most historians now concur that Rudolf first shot and killed Mary and then put a bullet through his head. But even that version is not entirely documented.

"It's all still unclear," said Martha Roessler, a pensioner who acts as a guide for a constant

trickle of visitors who ring the bell at the locked chapel, built on Franz Josef's orders on the spot where his son's body was found.

"The Imperial House has hushed up everything and secret documents are lying around somewhere," said the elderly lady.

In two small adjoining rooms a few pictures, the facsimile of a death notice and some period furniture remind visitors of the former imperial owner and his young lover.

But the rest of the Mayerling Complex, located in pleasant rolling countryside, is off limits to visitors because it houses Carmelite nuns, a secluded religious order committed to silence.

Among the recent books published on Mayerling is one by Gerd Holler, a physician who has

put years of research into the personal, medical and historical aspects of the case.

His book, *Mayerling — New Documents on the Tragedy 100 Years Afterward*, adds a new dimension to the more serious theories on the events.

Citing documents, testimony and what he considers circumstantial evidence, Holler asserts that Rudolf arranged for an abortion because Mary was allegedly in the third month of pregnancy.

According to Holler, Rudolf committed suicide after Mary bled to death. The author names two doctors who, he says, were hurriedly summoned to the Mayerling castle but apparently failed to save Mary's life.

Holler believes that Rudolf used some morphine, but he discounts rumours given credence by some other historians that the Hapsburg heir drank excessively or was a drug addict.

Historian Brigitte Hamann, in her book *Rudolf, Crown Prince and Rebel*, describes the crown prince as a man who was overwhelmed by a hopeless situation.

He was denied papal permission to divorce his wife although his marriage was a failure and the couple had only one child — a girl who could not carry on the Hapsburg line.

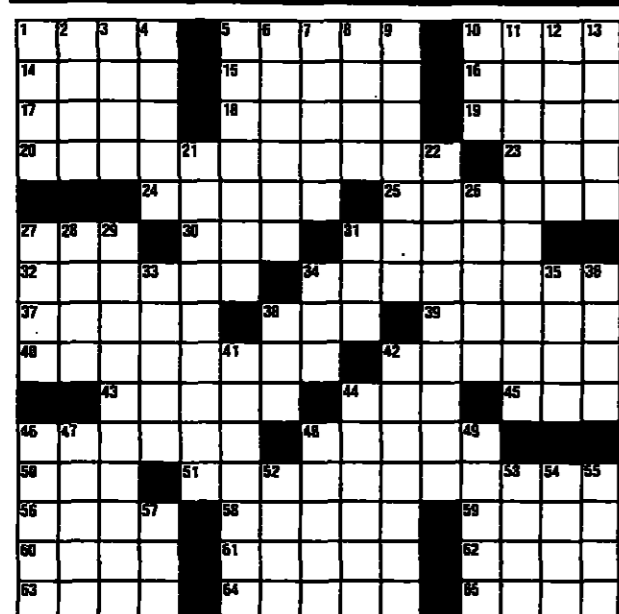
Views. His political views differed sharply from those of his father, and he did not see a chance for liberalized rule in years to come. Franz Josef was 59 when Rudolf died.

The question about the macabre details of the catastrophe of Mayerling loses a good deal of importance if one becomes aware of the crown prince's desolate physical and psychic (not the intellectual) constitution in the last months of his life, Hamann wrote.

Karl von Hapsburg, the grandson of Austria's Emperor Karl I, who is a law student and a political consultant in Salzburg, still maintains the family silence on Mayerling.

"Our family does not take any stand on this," he told the Associated Press by telephone on Jan. 27. "It is entirely irrelevant" what really happened, he said. "I don't look into any of those books. It isn't really a topic."

TODAY'S CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Sunset, e.g.
 - Metric weights
 - Eight, in Essen
 - Den
 - De natura — (of the nature of things)
 - Easy's partner
 - Peak in Thessaly
 - Certain Arab
 - Length of cloth
 - Masticates
 - Street sign
 - Like a praline
 - Keep — (watch)
 - Protestant denom.
 - "The Raven" poet
 - thieves
 - Ship decks
 - Baboon
 - Traffic problem
 - Alcott girl
 - Martini-like volcano
 - Rabble, to Rabelais
 - Heel over
 - Greek sea: Var.
 - Taste
 - Sign of a hit
 - Carpenter's squares
 - More rational
 - 1949 Nobelist
 - Part of a tool chest
 - Hammer part
 - Keep — on (watch)
 - "— le roi"
 - Numbers, in Nimes
 - More recent
 - Idyllic place
 - Money in Monterey
 - Ancient instruments
- DOWN**
- Camper's cover
 - Legislative group
 - Critique severely
 - Tool with jaws
 - Sketched
 - Caves
 - Distant
 - Sheik of —
 - Actor Paul —
 - Love-struck
 - Langley or Lackland: Abbr.
 - Registers for two party primaries
 - Greeting
 - Grand — National Park
 - They provide the goods
 - Polishing aid
 - Tool or insect
 - Variety of pear
 - Water buffalo's
 - Sycamores, e.g.
 - Sandra —
 - O'Connor
 - Storm, in Normandy
 - Marselles Mrs.
 - Wolf's expression
 - Cotton fabric
 - Northumberland river
 - Milan landmark
 - Hearth residue
 - Finn's friend
 - Clear
 - A Forsyte
 - Look after
 - Fastener for Rosie
 - Cell acids, for short
 - Footnote direction
 - Level
 - Lessor's income
 - D.C. orchestra

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

REDS ANKA ARENA
ERAT GOLS MOTOR
PARR ERAS ATONE
ATEE SAXOPHONES
YODEL ORAL
PEDANTS CORB
IBA ERRS TOUPEE
NOSTRUM CUTRATE
RACISM AURA LAP
ETHS MURDERS
BEIT YOUNG
CONCERTINA OTTOE
ADORE ISIS NILE
MONET ETNA ELAS
PROWS DEEP REINE

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF

GAMBLING WITH GAMBLING

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♠ A 7 3

♥ 7 5 4 2

♦ 9 6 2

♣ Q 5

WEST

♠ K 10 8 6 2

♥ A Q 3

♦ 8 4

♣ K 9 7

EAST

♠ J 9 4

♥ K 10 8

♦ 5

♣ A 10 8 6 3 2

SOUTH

♠ Q 5

♥ J 6

♦ A K Q J 10 7 3

♣ J 4

The bidding:

South West North East

3 NT Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♠

Conventions come and conventions go. Some years ago, the Gambling Three No Trump Convention was very much in vogue with tournament bridge players, but today, in its original form, it has fallen on lean times. However, it still crops up from time to time, and unless the defense is on its toes, it can wreak havoc.

South's opening bid was typical of the Gambling Three No Trump, which shows a hand with a solid seven-card minor suit and not much in the side suits. Partner can gamble

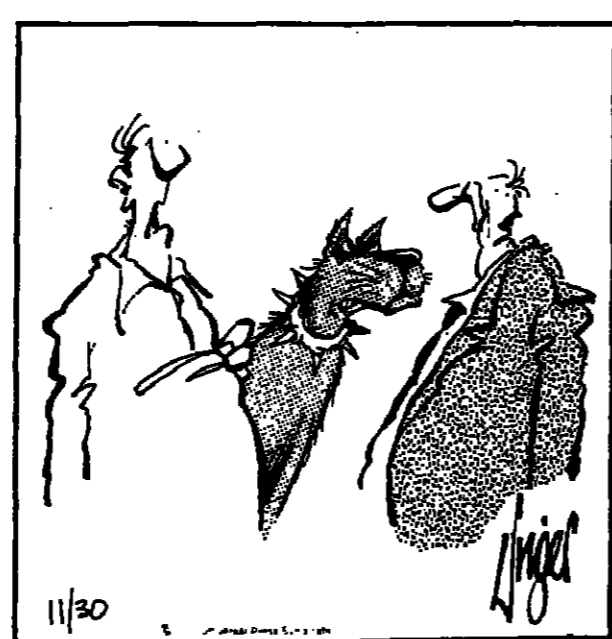
it out with a smattering of cards, or he can bail out in four of the minor. Here, there's no question that he would have been wiser to run to four diamonds, but he was afraid that, if he showed weakness, he might invite the opponents into the auction.

West made his normal lead of fourth-best from his longest suit. Declarer had to decide whether to take his eight fast tricks and settle for down one, or whether to try for his contract at the risk of going down about six tricks.

Since the difference between down 50 and down 300 was not calamitous, declarer decided to go for broke. He called for a low spade from dummy, and when East did not produce the king, nine tricks were there.

When an opponent opens with a gambling three no trump, you cannot afford to make a normal lead. You know that he can run at least seven tricks against you, so you have to take your tricks quickly. If you have one, you should select an ace for your opening lead, so that you could get a look at dummy.

Had West led his ace of hearts, the club shift would have been apparent. That would have permitted the defenders, rather than declarer, to collect the first nine tricks.



"He loves people. But mostly he gets canned dog food."

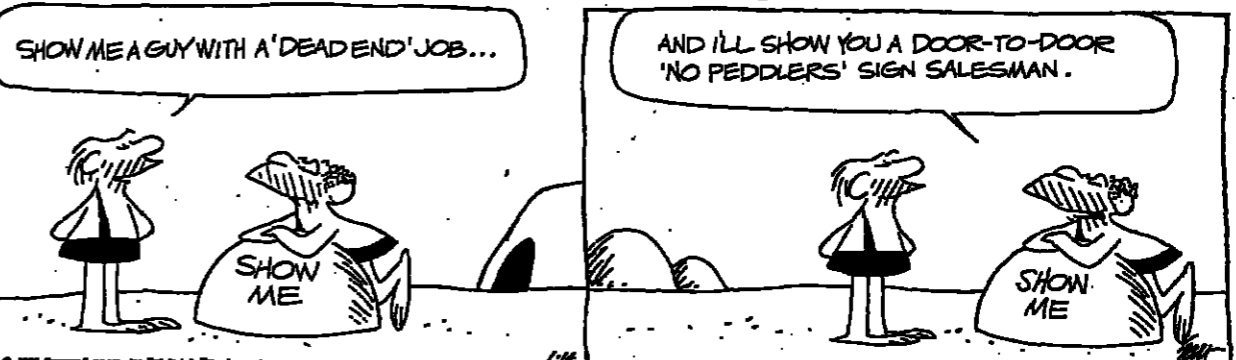
THE WIZARD OF ID

By Grant Parker and Johnny Hart



B.C.

By Johnny Hart



YOUR STARS



Aries (March 20 - April 18)

You will feel more like starting on a new venture, but make sure you are heading in the right direction. You will be able to overcome one of your problems, but not for good.



Taurus (April 19 - May 19)

You should realize that you have not got all the time in the world. The general prospects are favourable but you must not rest on your laurels. Try to look more on the positive side. Be benevolent.



Gemini (May 20 - June 20)

This is going to be an interesting and rewarding day for you. Do not allow your emotions to get into a tangle. A lot depends on you and your attitude. Be gracious.



Cancer (June 21 - July 21)

You should not leave more than absolutely necessary to chance. You will find it easier to adapt to and progress with change. No need to lose faith in yourself. Be hopeful.



Leo (July 22 - Aug 21)

You will find it easier to stay on good terms with those around you. You should not try to do by force something you have failed to do by persuasion. Leave yourself with sufficient room for manoeuvre. Be less extravagant.



Virgo (Aug 22 - Sept 21)

This is an interesting period for you but you do not have time for all you would like to do. Instead you should concentrate first on essentials. Do not place too much trust in relative strangers just now. Be grateful.



Libra (Sept 22 - Oct 22)

You should seek to ensure that you do not stand in your own light. Try to look at matters from still another point of view. Venus' more favourable position will help you deal with a personal problem. Be kind.



Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

You will tend to tire rather more easily and should make sure you do not dissipate your energies. Leave less essential matters until tomorrow but no longer. Avoid losing your sense of proportions. Be discreet.



Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

You will have to keep calm when dealing with an irritable person. There will be a good opportunity to make amends and you should seize it. You should not allow yourself to be persuaded to do something you feel is wrong. Be less negligent.



Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

You should try to ensure that you do not do the right thing at the wrong time. The better influence of Mars and Jupiter will help you to achieve some more concrete results. A little more exercise will do you a lot of good. Be moderate.



Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

You should seek to ensure that your affairs do not get into a muddle. The Moon's better influence will help you to "sense" what is the right thing to do. And Venus' more favourable influence will aid you to reduce tension. Be careful.



Pisces (Feb 19 - March 19)

With a little more patience you will be able to overcome what at first seemed a most formidable obstacle. You should not waste time and mental energy on relatively trivial matters. You should resist others dictating to you. Be active.

SUPPLEMENT ON YESUDAS

By Fathima Ahmed

Top Indian singer laments decline in musical standard

Yesudas: my only reward is audience appreciation

A SORE throat? A common ailment, perhaps, dismissed or endured with a whisper and a whimper but when a singer of Yesudas' stature gets a sore throat, it threatens to snowball into a major crisis.

In early January, popular Indian singer Yesudas got a sore throat after performing continuously at a Madras festival of classical music in December. He cancelled several concerts scheduled for January in his native Kerala, in Madras and in Kuwait.

Panic spread among organisers. One in Trivandrum threatened to sue; others were blamed for "running away with public funds."

"Classical music is very strenuous. A singer has to give his heart and soul to make it worth listening, and singing continuously takes its toll," says Yesudas, who nearly lost his voice and was advised to "take a rest and avoid singing" for a month.

"A sore throat may be a minor ailment for you but to a singer it is a disease; we are after all human beings and prone to illness," said the singer hoarsely, discussing his much talked about sore throat.

Not that he has lost his voice, but the infection affected his "vocal chords" and it was difficult for him to maintain the quality of his voice, he said.

"Instead of singing in a poor voice, I took the doctor's advice and took a rest, like any ordinary man," he said at a news conference in Kuwait yesterday.

Success

Yesudas is no ordinary man. His has been a success story since he hit the music scene more than 30 years ago. It was not easy climbing up the success ladder. His struggle began at the age of six, when his father pushed him to study music.

"My father wanted me to be a classical musician; he trained me for it," he recalls. Soon, he realised that classical music was not widely appreciated.

"I have realised that people don't appreciate highly technical music," he said regretfully, but he didn't give it up. Along with classical, he



Vijay (centre) looks up at his father Yesudas as Sujatha looks on.

branched into semi-classical and light music, the two types of music that people understood.

Despite financial constraints, and armed only with a bagful of talent, he pursued his mission single-mindedly, until success came in the shape of an award, the first of many, in 1965.

"A singer must have an inborn talent; it cannot be created by training, education or practice. He must be gifted

with a voice, which like a rough diamond can be cut and polished to shine," he explains.

Like a diamond, he shines. But Yesudas had to make "many sacrifices" to become the No. 1 singer in South India. In the North, he flirted with Hindi film music for a while, winning an award for his songs in Chitchor.

A firm believer in discipline and rigorous practice he compromised to stay afloat by

singing pop songs.

"I thought I could avoid singing such (pop/disco) songs; but composers asked me to; if I didn't someone else would, so I did," he explains.

He scoffs at critics who claim he is blocking younger singers from coming up in music circles in the South. "I have avoided singing songs which are suitable for them (new generation of singers); what else can I do?" and then, as an afterthought, he asks, "do you want me to stop singing and stay at home?"

"You shouldn't blame a person for being competitive. I have achieved what I did through hard work, discipline and rigorous practice; perhaps, I had the voice and talent too. No one stopped me; they (new singers) can also work their way up. If they can't, what can I do?" he asks.

His foray into Hindi films was short and sweet. But somewhere along the way, he discontinued singing in Hindi. "It's nobody's fault. I was coming up after Chitchor, and at the same time, I was

building a music studio in Trivandrum and word spread that I was not available, even though I was," he said. He has no regrets.

"I achieved a bigger position in Carnatic music," he said. He is one of the top singers in the field, and he intends to keep working to achieve the top spot.

He is keen on Carnatic music, which he studied from the age of six and is still learning. "I have gathered only a drop of knowledge about Carnatic music, I've yet to learn more," says the singer. Not content with performing, he has prepared the base to give his knowledge to "anyone who has the aptitude."

In 1986 Yesudas attempted to revive the "guru kul" system, under which a student lives with the guru and learns from him. A student is expected to adhere to a strict code of discipline and practice.

The singer's ambitious programme received a setback from bureaucratic interference in Kerala. The government imposed restrictions on "private schools" and discontinued giving licences.

"I'm very unhappy about this development," said Yesudas, "they (government) doesn't do anything for music and when someone wants, they don't permit him to."

He feels that there is something wrong with the music culture in Kerala and the South.

In the North, an artist's son grows up to be an artist, but not so in the South. North Indian artists insist on their children following their father's career. But in the South, parents prefer modern education for their children. Training in arts has become secondary, he said.

Yesudas is now trying to draw his 10-year-old son Vijay into music. "I ask him not to waste time; to practice and to learn as much as he can. But I can't inject interest for music in my son, or my pupils," he said.

Homes

"We had high hopes and dreams," of reviving the "guru kul" system but his efforts were thwarted.

He had asked the Kerala government for land for his schools, but they rejected his appeal despite his assurance that he would build and run them. "If they can't do this, what can they do for the public?"

The public adores and idolises him. He believes they have played a vital role in his success. "If no one hears you, how will you succeed?" he asks and adds: "My reward is audience appreciation; when they applaud and recognise me, I feel fulfilled," he said.

He "gives the people what they want". You can't say "I'll only sing classical music; if you want to listen, you do, otherwise don't," he says, blaming the people's attitude and tastes for the deterioration of music. Yesudas didn't want to be a part of the declining scene but then realised that if he didn't, someone else would.

"The standard of films has gone down — the story, situations and knowledge of the director has been restricted to action films. Now heroes come with guns in their hand. What sort of music can you have in such situations...?" he asks.

"You can't sing 'pariatham' ... everything has declined ... even life in general," he laments.

But those were the good old days when semi-classical music was part of film music. He never imitated any singer but admired the golden voices of yesteryears like Mohammad Rafi, Mukesh, Manna Dey and others.

He parries questions about personal favourites saying "not everyone is broadminded; everyone is good at some point or the other."

His only regret has been the loss of his privacy. "I miss many things; I can't take a stroll in a park; walk on a street or do things that normal people enjoy doing — like smoking and drinking." And added: "People's appreciation gives me more of a kick than a drink."

And there is no time ... not even to play the veena. Perhaps, not even to count his mounting millions.

"I'm happy because they (government) can take my money in taxes but they can't take my voice or music."

Yesudas misses such "luxuries" like eating ice cream or taking soft drinks. Perhaps, these are minor irritants for the singer who is adored by millions — despite his human frailties, like getting a sore throat when least desired.

Yesudas is also accompanied by female vocalist Sujatha Mohan.



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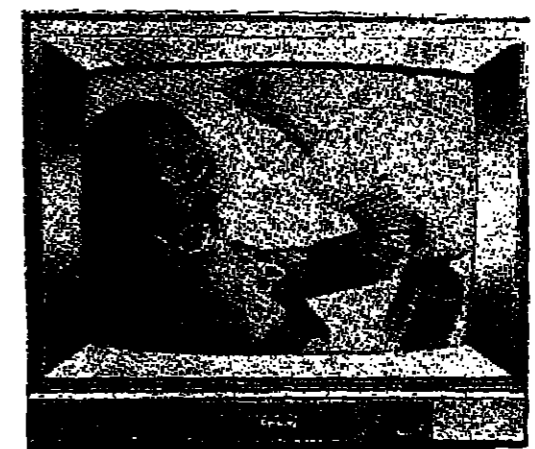


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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Kodak to display health care products in Dubai Trade Centre

KODAK (Near East) Inc. has announced it will be displaying a wide range of medical, dental and clinical products at the Arab Health and Dentistry Exhibition to be held at the Dubai Trade Centre from Feb 12 to 15.

"While Kodak is most often recognised for its consumer photographic products we also have very active health science and clinical divisions that have firmly established Kodak as a technological leader in regional health care," said Ashraf Kinawi, marketing manager CIS/DT, Kodak (Near East) Inc.

Products
"Because our products are in use in hospitals, medical centres and doctors' clinics throughout the GCC states and all over the world, the Arab Health and Dentistry Exhibition provides us with the ideal opportunity to demonstrate Kodak's latest products and innovations to our distributors and users," he added.

Kodak manufactures more than a dozen different radiographic films for general purposes and highly specialised X-ray procedures. These films, together with a selection of accessories, screens, identification cameras and processing equipment, will form the core of the medical and dental imaging products on display.

Clinical products will include sophisticated serum analyzers for use in hospitals and clinics as well as the latest in medical test kits, featuring innovative use of dry chemistry technology for rapid blood analysis.

Products
"We will also use the exhibition to launch some products in both the medical and clinical areas which are totally new to the Middle East, and which we believe have exciting potential," said Kinawi.

Kodak is committed to quality and service and this exhibition will also enable us to demonstrate our commitment to health care in the Middle East.

Romania announces large trade surplus

VIENNA, Feb 5, (Reuters): Romania announced a 1988 trade surplus of some \$4 billion today, saying this would permit large loan repayments under President Nicolae Ceausescu's plan to wipe out Western debt.

"Foreign trade activities in 1988 ended with a roughly \$4,000 million surplus of the trade balance in convertible currency, ensuring the payment of a substantial share of the foreign debt," a Romanian communiqué said.

The communiqué, issued through the official news agency Agerpres, gave no details of how much debt had been repaid.

To cut debt, Ceausescu has throttled imports and launched an all-out export drive under which most of Romania's best food has been sold for hard currency to the West.

But Western diplomats said repaying Western debts at breakneck speed had inflicted chronic shortages of food, heating and lighting on Romanians.

Last December, a Foreign Trade Ministry official said Romania had cut its gross Western trade from a peak of \$10.5 billion in 1981 to a net zero when the amount other countries owed Bucharest was subtracted from the gross figure.

Romania is secretive about actual figures but Western diplomats estimate it is owed between \$2.5 and \$3 billion, chiefly by Third World states.

US crude prices drop

NEW YORK, Feb 5, (Reuters): Crude oil futures fell 20 cents a barrel yesterday, ending lower for the week amid indications that OPEC's oil-cutting pact may be reducing production less than the organisation had hoped.

The West Texas Intermediate spot March crude contract closed 20 cents lower at \$17.53 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. For the week, the spot March contract ended 21 cents lower than last Friday.

Gains
Prices sagged earlier in the week but rebounded sharply on Thursday on newspaper reports that Dubai may cut output by 10 per cent or 40,000 barrels per day by March 1.

However, US energy markets failed to sustain those gains on Friday amid doubts whether Dubai will actually make the cut.

OAPEC predicts increased demand for oil in '90s

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (AP): The Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries today predicted increased demand for oil in the 1990s, making it easier for OPEC to stabilise prices on the glutted market.

OAPEC, a Kuwait-based group that includes the Arab members of the 13-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, also said alternative fuels like coal and nuclear energy were declining in importance.

"The slow pace of shifts in the pattern of energy demand notwithstanding, the environment in which the world oil market will evolve during the coming few years should make the task of OPEC in achieving price stability for oil less arduous," said an editorial in the

OAPEC monthly bulletin for February. The OAPEC member-states that also belong to the 13-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Libya and Algeria.

Membership
Other OAPEC member-states are Syria, Tunisia and Bahrain, while Egypt's membership was suspended after its 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

"Consumption trends indicate that the shift away from oil has run its course," the bulletin said. "Oil will once again take a bigger slice of new demand for energy because the obstacles inherent in the consumption of coal and nuclear have become more relevant as their use expanded."

It added: "The campaign to reduce the role of oil in the world's energy mix has become economically unjustified." The OAPEC editorial singled out safety, ecology and cost as key "interrelated factors" behind the trend away from coal and nuclear energy.

Dependence
The editorial said that nations promoting reduced dependence on oil have "underestimated costs of changing systems."

Costs are a major factor in nuclear energy development, the bulletin noted. It pointed out that Sweden has decided to scrap its nuclear power plants over the next two decades, while the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union and France are slowing down their nuclear

energy programmes. "The price of oil, on the other hand, dropped 50 per cent in less than five years without substantially affecting the short-term capacity to supply oil," it stated. "No other commodity is endowed with so much intrinsic flexibility."

Advantage
OAPEC noted that the relative price advantage of oil and natural gas "will probably inhibit any dramatic growth in the share of alternatives for the next 10 to 15 years."

But the bulletin said that "dramatic shifts" to oil and gas were not expected since "overall demand will continue to be modified by the effects of higher efficiency in fuel consumption and energy conservation."

US administration keen to tackle deficit problem

G-7 impresses on Bush need to close budget gap

WASHINGTON, Feb 5, (Reuters): In the unlikely event he needed reminding, President George Bush had another warning that the continued health of the world economy depends heavily on a credible plan to cut the US budget deficit.

Rising interest rates, the threat of inflation and an intractable US trade deficit can all be traced back to the budget gap, the United States was told by its allies at a two-day meeting which ended here on Friday.

The talks brought together finance ministers and central bankers of the Group of Seven major industrial nations — the United States, Japan, West Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Canada.

US Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady sought to assure his G-7 colleagues that Bush

enjoyed good relations with Congress. This, he said, should facilitate a deal to reduce the deficit.

With Bush not due to outline his budget plans to Congress until Thursday, Brady could not give specific pledges to the G-7. All he could say, in effect, was: "trust us."

The soothing words seemed to work.

Spending
"Brady has assured us of the Bush administration's stronger determination to tackle its deficit problem, and this was really encouraging to us all," a Japanese Finance Ministry official said.

Yet G-7 officials also recognise that Bush will need more than just goodwill to get the deficit down, especially if Federal Reserve (central bank)

chairman Alan Greenspan is forced to keep raising interest rates to counter the inflation threat.

French Finance Minister Pierre Berégovoy and his West German counterpart, Gerhard Stoltenberg, both made a point of reminding Brady that if Congress and the administration failed to agree, the 1985 Gramm-Rudman law, designed to eliminate the budget deficit by 1991, would come into play.

It would reduce government spending automatically in order to lower the deficit next year to \$100 billion from a projected \$161.5 billion in 1989.

The message to Brady, who like Bush does not really need reminding of the details of Gramm-Rudman, was clear: "We foreigners have patiently financed your massive overspending in recent years, but now

your 1988 election is over it is in your own best interest, as well as ours, to get serious about the deficit."

The financial markets have been rallying in recent weeks on the hope Bush will do just that, but the honeymoon could end abruptly if the President fails to deliver the goods.

Greenspan has had to err on the side of dearer money because the budget deficit leaves little room for the US economy to keep up its recent growth without risking inflation.

Rise
Although G-7 ministers congratulated themselves for having contained inflationary expectations in 1988, no one was rash enough to say with full certainty that the danger was past.

British Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson said

there was a "full understanding" that if countries felt more interest rate rises were necessary then "they should and must."

It is this spectre of a competitive rise in global interest rates that haunts the G-7. Higher rates not only slow economic growth and deepen the plight of the Third World but also unsettle markets and politicians.

Because fierce public criticism by then US Treasury Secretary James Baker of rising West German interest rates contributed to the October 1987 stock market crash, the G-7 has tried hard to close ranks on monetary policy.

They did so again last week. But the G-7 will give a huge sigh of relief if and when the United States sets the seal on a plan that, without smoke and mirrors, holds out the prospect of substantial deficit cuts.

US inflation fears recede

NEW YORK, Feb 5, (AP): A series of recent price increases suggest that one group of economy-watchers is worrying less, not more, about inflation.

The prices in question are those of common stocks, up close to 15 per cent on average over the last 2-1/2 months.

At their lows in mid-November, Wall Street was brimming with optimism about the economy, was straining the capacity of the nation's factories and labour force.

The resulting inflationary pressures, it was said, would push interest rates sharply higher and set the economy on a course toward recession.

Since then, however, money managers at investing institutions seem to have reassessed the inflation outlook, bidding stocks up to levels not seen since before Black Monday on Oct 19, 1987.

A good many observers, including chairman Alan Greenspan of the Federal Reserve

Board, have warned lately that inflation remains a threat.

But as people make their investment decisions these days, they appear to be operating more and more on the assumption that the Fed will keep inflation in check without stifling the business expansion.

Commitment
That thinking is evident in the behaviour of long-term interest rates in the bond market, which actually have declined a bit even as the Fed has tightened credit and short-term interest rates have moved up.

"The bullish sentiment in the bond market in January has partly reflected the viewpoint that short-term rates will not have to rise much higher and for a prolonged period in order for the Fed to contain inflation," said Maury Harris, economist at Fainwebber Inc.

Similarly, David Resler at Nomura Securities International Inc., observed, "through word

and deed, Mr Greenspan has proven his commitment to hold inflation in check."

"We suspect that the principal reason for these rather euphoric markets is the growing belief that discipline will govern both monetary and budgetary policies during the year (and, perhaps, years) ahead."

In the past week, the Dow Jones average of 30 industrials rose 8.39 to 2,311.25 posting its fifth straight weekly gain since the start of 1989.

Depleted
The New York Stock Exchange composite index gained 1.72 to 166.50, the Nasdaq composite index for the over-the-counter market added 8.39 to 406.35, and the American Stock Exchange market value index was up 3.31 at 324.88.

Volume on the big board averaged 186.79 million shares a day, against 196.40 million the week before.

Turkish austerity working: Ozal

ANKARA, Feb 5, (Reuters): Turkey's austerity programme, which has slammed the brakes on economic growth, is winning the battle against inflation and will continue, Prime Minister Turgut Ozal said yesterday.

"I won't bother even if the growth rate goes down to 3.5 per cent...the first priority is the fight against inflation," Ozal told Reuters in an interview.

The government's will to continue the year-old austerity programme is being closely watched by bankers and businessmen, who have laid off thousands of workers.

Spending
The crunch follows a boom in 1984-88. Heavy deficit spending sent GNP growth up to 8.1 per

cent in 1986, fuelled inflation and triggered alarm signals from foreign lenders.

But Ozal said a sharp cutback in state spending in 1988 had stemmed the budget deficit, the major cause of inflation.

Turkey's 3.44 trillion lira (\$2.42 billion) budget deficit in 1988 was 48 per cent over target but less than initial estimates and less in dollar terms than in 1987.

Ozal said the 1988 current account would show a record \$900 million surplus, helped by a ban on big new foreign projects, a rise in tourism revenue and a lower trade deficit.

Inflation, 75 per cent at the end of 1988, has declined from a post-1980 peak of 87 per cent in November.

"We are a window-case (for World Bank policies)," he said. "If I am successful this year and next year, then growth will be much sounder."

Caution
Foreign bankers have welcomed the figures but caution that they may not tell the whole story. They say much depends on keeping spending tight despite key local elections in March.

Ozal said the brake on new spending would not affect projects financed by the build-operate-transfer system like the Ankara metro project due to start soon. The giant Ataturk Dam being built in southeast Turkey would also get more cash.

New taxes to boost Japan's luxury imports

TOKYO, Feb 5, (AP): New tax laws to take effect April 1 will likely boost sales of automobiles, liquor, jewellery and high-tech electronics — good news for companies exporting to Japan.

Economists say that while the mainstay of the tax reform, a three per cent sales tax, will raise many prices in this nation, the overall impact on the Japanese economy will be positive.

The new laws, the first major overhaul of Japan's tax system since 1949, will reduce income, residential, corporate and inheritance taxes by 5.8 trillion yen (\$45 billion) in fiscal 1989, which begins April 1.

In line with government policy, the reform will encourage consumption of luxury products through the elimination of a variety of special taxes on cars, liquor, jewellery, golf equipment and electronics. This step is expected to inject an additional 3.4 trillion yen (\$26.4 billion) into Japan's robust economy in fiscal 1989.

Japan's 40-year-old tax structure no longer suited the needs of an affluent, ageing society,

Shigeo Ohara, director of the Finance Ministry's research division, said yesterday.

The system, drafted by US occupation authorities while Japan was rebuilding after its defeat in World War II, slapped luxury taxes on liquor, tobacco, furs, jewellery, large appliances and other items.

"Now, it's hard to decide what goods are luxury items," Ohara said.

Retailers will see sales increase when taxes as high as 23 per cent are replaced by the three per cent sales tax, says Richard C. Koo, senior economist at Nomura Research Institute.

"It's a positive step in encouraging consumption... It should make a big difference," Koo said.

Criticism
The reform also is intended to help cut Japan's trade surplus and respond to foreign criticism that taxes on high-quality liquor and other goods boosted import prices, Ohara said.

The Finance Ministry estimates that the new tax laws alone, by slashing prices on lux-

ury imports, will cut Japan's current account surplus by \$2 billion in 1991, the year it chose for its analysis.

Overall, the tax reform is expected to boost Japan's real gross national product estimated at 370.3 trillion yen (\$2.87 trillion) in fiscal 1988, by about 0.2 per cent, the ministry says.

Although consumer prices are forecast to rise 1.2 per cent as a result of a new sales tax, the net decrease in taxes will total 2.6 trillion yen (\$20.2 billion). The sales tax will bring in revenues amounting to 3.2 trillion yen (\$24.8 billion) in fiscal 1989, it says.

However, some predict the government will quickly raise the sales tax rate from the initial three per cent, resulting in an increase in total taxes.

The main goal of the reform, the government maintains, is to distribute the tax burden more equitably. The tax cuts favour middle-aged couples through special deductions for dependents aged 16 to 22.

"The middle-aged salary workers felt their tax burdens

were heavy and unfair, given the high educational expenses for their children," Ohara said.

But critics say the new sales tax is a virtual sieve of loopholes that favours the rich while squeezing lower-income earners.

The new sales tax exempts all retailers with annual sales below 30 million yen (\$232,558), about a third of all Japanese businesses — a move that gained the tax's acceptance among the shopkeepers' associations that helped defeat earlier attempts at tax reform.

Land sales, sales of securities, insured medical costs and some educational costs are also exempt from the new tax.

A study by the Shimomura Consumers' Co-operative Association, a Tokyo consumers' group, says that under the new tax laws, a four-member household with an annual income of 6.6 million yen (\$53,225) would pay 162,000 yen (\$1,256) less in income and residents' taxes but 62,000 yen (\$481) more in sales taxes, for a net decrease of 100,000 yen (\$775).

World Business Summary

New Yorker signs contract to open pizza restaurant in China

BEIJING, Feb 5, (AP): A former law student from New York said yesterday he is signing a contract to open in Beijing what could be the world's largest pizza restaurant. Richard Rosenzweig said his planned 600-seat New York City Pizza will offer fast-food service and delivery, and will omit the cheese if customers wish. Cheese is not part of the Chinese diet, and many Chinese don't like it at first bite. But Rosenzweig, 26, who remembers craving pizza in vain while studying law in Beijing in 1986, said he thinks they'll get used to it. If they don't, they can order pizza without cheese but with tomato sauce, vegetables and pork, China's staple meat. "We're not going to change the recipe of the pizza, it'll be authentic, but when it comes to toppings, we'll take a lot of Chinese input," Rosenzweig said. Foreigners currently can buy local chefs' interpretation of pizza at several Western-run hotels, but there is no restaurant selling pizza to Chinese. Rosenzweig said the company he founded, New York City Pizza Corp., would sign a joint-venture contract today with the Beijing Yanshi Development and Trade Corp., a subsidiary of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Chinese are putting up \$1.5 million and will train the staff in the arcane craft of making New York-style pizza. Ground-breaking for the restaurant is scheduled for March 1, and Rosenzweig said it will be open by May 1, 1990. About a mile (1.5 kilometres) to the west in Tiananmen Square, Beijing's first Western fast-food restaurant, Kentucky Fried Chicken, has been doing a record-setting business. Its managers say they sell an average of 1,300 chickens a day, more than any other restaurant in the chain world-wide. Rosenzweig said his pizza restaurant will be even bigger, with 600 seats to Kentucky Fried's 510. "This has got to be the biggest pizza restaurant in the world. Where else in the world would there be a need for such a big restaurant?" he said.

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SALWA, Area 11, 2 bedroom flat with tele., carpets, curtains, quality furniture, appliances, plants, kitchen equipment and bedding. KD1250. Rent KD240. Tele. 2438011 ext. 246, 5640102.

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SPORTS

Christie scores easy victories

COSFORD, England, Feb 5. (AP): British Olympic silver medalist Linford Christie issued a warning to his rivals yesterday after racing to victory in both sprints at the British National Indoor Track and Field Championships.

In his first competition since the Seoul Games, Christie clocked 6.55 seconds in the 60-metre dash, tying his national record and posting the fastest time on an indoor track in Britain.

His time of 20.95 in the 200 broke his record of 20.96 for the best time ever indoors in Britain.

"My aim is to become the world's No. 1 sprinter," said Christie, who was placed second to American Carl Lewis in the 100 metres at Seoul, following the disqualification of Ben Johnson. "I feel I can go under 6.50 (in the 60-metre dash) this season."

In the 60, Christie fought off Michael Rosswess, another British Olympic finalist at Seoul, who finished second in 6.63.

Performances

The two-day meet, which began Friday, also produced winning performances by Olympic hurdles silver medalist Colin Jackson and Jamaican sprint stars Grace Jackson and Merlene Ottey.

The meet produced some stirring performances for the near-capacity crowd in the 3,000-seat converted airplane hanger on the Royal Air Force base.

Colin Jackson, silver medalist in the Olympic 100-metre high hurdles, tied his national record of 7.52 in the 60-metre hurdles. He finished two metres ahead of fellow Welshman Nigel Walker, who clocked 7.69, then said he was aiming for the European indoor mark of 7.48, held by East German Thomas Munkelt.

Grace Jackson, the silver medalist behind American Florence Griffith Joyner in the 200 metres in Seoul, cruised to victory over the same distance in a meet record 23.35 seconds. Ottey, who was fourth in the women's 200 at Seoul, won the 400 in 52.21.

Johnson wants to run in Barcelona

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain, Feb 5. (Reuters): Ben Johnson, out of the public eye since his fall from grace at the Seoul Olympics, made a guest appearance at a cycle race in Spain yesterday and said he hoped to return for the 1992 Games in Barcelona.

The Canadian sprinter, stripped of his 100 metres gold medal in Seoul last summer when he tested positive for drugs, fired the starting pistol at the Basque country six-hour track race in the northern city of San Sebastian.

RICHARDSON SLAMS AUSTRALIA FOR CENTURY

Whitney stops W. Indian onslaught

ADELAIDE, Australia, Feb 5. (Reuters): Left-arm paceman Mike Whitney ripped through the West Indies batting today, taking six wickets to give Australia a good chance of winning the fifth and final Test.

At stumps on the third day West Indies were 338 for eight wickets, 177 behind Australia's first innings 515.

Richie Richardson, with 106, scored his second century of the series, putting on 167 for the second wicket with Desmond Haynes after taking the Australian bowling apart in the first 30 minutes with a selection of glorious strokes.

But Whitney's entry into the attack after lunch spelt the end for Richardson and Carl Hooper fell just four runs later.

Previous

Haynes scored 83, his third successive half-century, before being run out by Geoff Marsh after Viv Richards had caught the opener by surprise calling for a quick single.

Haynes, who clocked up his 5,000th Test run during his innings, has scored 521 runs in the series, making him West Indies record run-scorer on a tour of Australia. Rohan Kanhai set the previous record of 503 runs on the 1960/61 tour.

Whitney, included in the side only because Terry Alderman was injured, again provided the breakthrough when he returned for his second spell after tea, snaring Viv Richards and Malcolm Marshall in his first four balls.

Richards, dropped when on 16, seemed set for a century hav-



Haynes (left) congratulates Richardson on scoring a century. (Reuters wirephoto)

ing reached 69 with a series of punting drives.

But Whitney, bowling over the wicket to slant the ball across the right-handers, induced Richards to hit a lofted drive to David Boon at short cover where Jones had earlier dropped the West Indian captain.

Marshall went without scoring, caught by Marsh in the gully, and Whitney completed a fine day's work which should guarantee his selection for the Ashes tour of England by dismissing Curtly Ambrose for nine shortly before the close.

Whitney, who had dismissed

Gordon Greenidge yesterday, finished with six for 75 off 24 overs.

Resuming at 74 for one, West Indies went on the attack immediately with Richardson leading the way. He reached his 50 off just 35 balls and took his side past 100 in only 123 balls with four boundaries off an over from Merv Hughes.

The introduction of spin slowed the scoring but Richardson, with Sir Don Bradman looking on, had time before lunch to overtake Kanhai's 503 runs before he himself was usurped by Haynes later in the day.

Whitney had Richardson caught at cover by Jones after he had added just two to his lunch score. Hooper was put down by Mark Taylor in the slips off Whitney before falling for two, caught by wicketkeeper Ian Healy off the left-arm.

Jones' spilling of an easy catch at short mid-off from Richards proved costly as the master, in probably his last Test on Australian soil, overcame early slackness to build a typically arrogant innings.

He put on 62 with Gus Logie before Logie was caught by Healy off leg-spinner Trevor Hohns.

Neither Logie nor Ambrose appeared happy against the mixture of leg-spin and left-arm pace and Ambrose survived a torrid period before finally falling to a great diving catch by David Boon at short leg.

Whitney, 30 later this month, said he believed his performance would silence those, such as former Australian captain Greg

Chappell, who believed he did not deserve his chance.

"My one thought is that I hope I've silenced a few of my critics," he said. "I've coped a fair bit with people saying I wasn't up to Test standard and shouldn't be selected."

"If I never play another Test I can always say I got six or even eight, with a couple of wickets remaining, against the West Indies."

"I reckon I'm the best old ball bowler in the world besides Imran Khan and a few of the Pakistanis because I have a method that makes the old ball move in the air."

"But it's always nice to prove them wrong and even if I never play another Test, I can say 'get stuffed'," said Whitney, playing in only his fourth Test in eight years.

Scoreboard

AUSTRALIA first innings 515 (D. Jones 216, M. Hughes 72 not out, A. Border 64)

WEST INDIES first innings (over-

night 74 for one)

G. Greenidge b Whitney 12

D. Haynes run out 83

R. Richardson c Jones b Whitney 106

C. Hooper c Healy b Whitney 2

V. Richards c Boon b Whitney 69

A. Logie c Healy b Hohns 21

J. Dejour not out 12

M. Marshall c Marsh b Whitney 0

C. Ambrose c Boon b Whitney 9

C. Walsh not out 22

Extras (b-6 lb-9 nb-7) 38

Total (for eight wickets) 338

Fall of wickets: 1-19 2-186 3-190 4-

231 5-293 6-315 7-315 8-331.

To bat: P. Patterson

Bowling to date: Hughes 15-0-86-8,

Whitney 24-6-75-6 (4nb), May 16-6-

42-0 (2nb), Waugh 3-0-17-0 (1nb),

Hohns 42-9-90-1, Border 10-2-13-0.

To bat: P. Patterson

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Charlton's Colin Pates (left) tries to get past Malcolm Allen of Norwich City during their game yesterday. (Reuters wirephoto)

'Psycho' Jones foils Wimbledon's attempts to clean up their image

LONDON, Feb 5. (Reuters): The attempts of English FA Cup holders Wimbledon to clean up their image lay in tatters yesterday as midfielder Vinny Jones, known widely as 'Psycho', was sent off again for violent conduct.

He was dismissed by referee Michael Peck for allegedly butting Everton captain Kevin Ratcliffe during the 1-1 draw at Goodison Park.

Manager Bobby Gould said he accepted the referee's verdict and pledged tough action against Jones, who was suspended and fined at the outset of the season for elbowing a player in the face during a friendly against an amateur side.

"I have got to keep hitting the players in the pocket. They will be suspended and banned - I am not going to throw the towel in," Gould said after the match.

Gould pledged early in the season to improve Wimbledon's image after they had gained the reputation of being one of the League's crudest sides, relying more on hard play and long balls rather than technique.

Jones was the prime target of the criticism.

He was also sent off during the same fixture against Everton last year and was involved in more controversy after a tackle that put Tottenham defender Gary Stevens in hospital with a snapped knee ligament this season - although his tackle was declared fair.

Wimbledon were fined by the FA last year because of their bad record and Gould admitted yesterday's incident was a setback.

"I felt we were winning, but this episode has destroyed a lot," he said.

The match was ill-tempered throughout and four other players, two from each side, were booked.

England manager Bobby Robson's World Cup preparations were dealt a blow with three players withdrawing from the squad for Wednesday's friendly against Greece.

Arsenal central defender Tony Adams cried off after suffering a recurrence of a back injury during the League leaders' 2-1 win over West Ham only hours after teammate Paul Davis had also been forced to pull out.

Everton's Ian Snodin, called up for the England squad for the first time, also withdrew after he failed a fitness test for the match against Wimbledon.

Arsenal's 2-1 win at home against London neighbours West Ham kept them three points clear at the top of the First Division but manager George Graham admitted afterwards they were lucky.

"We played some good football when we were two goals up. Then we gave a goal away and it was nail-biting stuff at the end. We got a bit lax when we were leading by two goals and I didn't enjoy the last 10 minutes at all," Graham said.

Second-placed Norwich also won by the same margin - and Charlton goalkeeper Bob Bolder accepted blame for his side's defeat which left them deep in the relegation zone.

Bolder was beaten by a 30-metre effort from Norwich's Andy Townsend which he looked to have covered but the ball bounced past him into the net.

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WORLD NUMBER TWO WINS PAN PACIFIC OPEN

Navratilova rallies to beat McNeil

TOKYO, Feb 5, (UPI): Top seed Martina Navratilova rebounded from a first-set tie break loss today to defeat fellow American Lori McNeil 6-7 (7-3), 6-3, 7-6 (7-5) in the final of the \$300,000 Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament.

McNeil, the seventh seed who upset No. 2 seed Chris Evert in the quarterfinals and fifth seed Zina Garrison in the semifinals, fought off double match point in the 12th game of the final set to force the tie-breaker. She took a brief 5-3 lead in the tie-breaker, but Navratilova won the next four points to put the match away.

Bigger

"I was definitely determined to win that last set tie-breaker," Navratilova said. "I made the bigger shots at the end. I was pretty unlucky not to have won it earlier."

The world number two was up 6-5 in the last set and held a 40-15 lead with McNeil serving in the 12th game. McNeil, however, fought back to tie the game as Navratilova netted a forehand



Navratilova lies on the ground after missing a shot.

(Reuters wirephoto)

volley, then backhanded a service return into the net.

McNeil finally won the game after going to deuce twice.

Navratilova served the opening game of the match but failed to win a point. McNeil then held service and was quickly up 2-0.

"I had a hard time reading her

serve at the beginning of the match," Navratilova said. "I wasn't timing it well. Her service seems to have gotten much faster than I remembered. I think she was also a little more ready to start the match."

Navratilova finally broke McNeil's serve in game six to tie

at 3-3, but each held service until the tie-breaker. With the tie-breaker even at 3-3, McNeil broke lose with four straight points to win the set.

McNeil, of Houston, played serve-and-volley to the end of the artificial courts at the Aoyama Gakuen Memorial Hall, making 103 advances to the net.

At times it seemed that Navratilova would rattle the 25-year-old, but after losing the second set, McNeil stepped up her play in the third to give the veteran a run.

McNeil broke Navratilova's service in the third game of the final set to take a 2-1 lead. But the cagey veteran, the owner of 17 Grand Slam titles, broke back in the fourth game to knot the score.

Each held serve until the final tie-breaker, but McNeil, with Navratilova serving, forced the 11th game to deuce. Navratilova, however, used a backhand, volley and an overhead smash to win the game and take the lead.

McNeil won her serve to forge the tie, and streaked to a 5-3 lead

in the tie-breaker on a cross-court forehand winner. Navratilova, with 14 years professional experience on her side, swept the next four points.

McNeil said before the match that the winner would be the player who returned serve the best. After Navratilova collected the \$50,000 winner's check, she agreed.

"When I was breaking her, I was breaking her playing pretty aggressive tennis and attacking her serve," the veteran said. "I think I returned her serve better and at the end, that's what got me through."

Confidence

Navratilova said that winning the close match, rather than throwing in the towel, gives her some added confidence for the upcoming tennis season.

"Just to come through in the crunch — get the first serve in when I had to, make the return, go for the shot and come out on top. I played to win. I didn't play to lose. This gives me a lot of confidence to play another close one," she said.



Skoff: beat Woodforde and Cash

Austrians shut out Australians in Cup

VIENNA, Austria, Feb 5, (Agencies): Austria today made a clean sweep of its Davis Cup world group encounter with Australia, for a final score of 5-0.

The hosts' surprising overall victory was already established yesterday when they won the doubles for a 3-0 unbeatable lead.

Today, Horst Skoff outplayed Mark Woodforde in three sets, 2-6, 6-4, 6-2, during which he broke his guest's serve five times.

"I wanted to show that we continued to battle even after 3-0," said 20-year-old Skoff, 41st in world standings.

Austria's number one player Thomas Muster made quick work of Australia's Pat Cash, winning the final match 6-2, 6-0 in 49 minutes.

Played

Austria went into a sensational 2-0 lead over Australia on Friday after the first two singles played on clay at Vienna's Dusika stadium before a sellout 6,500 crowd.

Skoff defeated Cash, a 1987 Wimbledon winner, 7-6, 7-5, 6-3, in the first encounter, and Muster, 14th in world standings, subdued Woodforde 6-4, 6-7, 6-2, 6-3.

In Malmo, Sweden, opening their campaign to recapture the Davis Cup without their two Grand Slam champions, secured a second-round berth today when Mikael Pernfors defeated Italy's Massimiliano Narducci.

Pernfors' heroic 6-3, 6-4, 6-7 (2-7), 6-3 victory, won despite cramp in both thighs, gave the Swedes an unassailable 3-1 lead in the world group tie and steered them into an away encounter against Austria from April 7-9.

Reverse

The outcome of the tougher than expected first round tie was a relief for new non-playing captain Jonte Sjogren, who had been without French and US champion Mats Wilander and Wimbledon champion Stefan Edberg, both out with injuries.

In Karlsruhe, title holders West Germany kept a clean sheet when they stretched their win over Indonesia to 5-0 in the

reverse singles of their Davis Cup world group tennis tie today.

The West Germans, who did not drop a set in the three-day tie, clinched victory yesterday when they took a 3-0 lead with a doubles victory.

Today's reverse singles were reduced to the best of three sets and world number five Boris Becker overcame Tintus Arianto Wibowo 6-2, 7-5 while Carl-Uwe Steeb beat Abdul Kahar Mimi 6-2, 6-2.

West Germany travel to Czechoslovakia for the second round from April 7 to 9.

In Fort Myers, Fla., the United States Davis Cup team yesterday took an unbeatable 3-0 lead over Paraguay in their world group first round tie, avenging a humiliating loss to the South American squad two years ago.

Robert Seguso and Ken Flach routed Victor Pecci and Francisco Gonzalez 6-1, 6-3, 6-4 in the doubles. Andre Agassi and Michael Chang won their singles matches on Friday.

In the 1987 opening round Paraguay had shocked the US 3-2 before a rowdy Asuncion crowd, the beginning of a US slide out of the world group and into zonal play.

Luck

And in Manama, Bahrain, local ace Esam Abdul Ali ousted Syria's Daoud Daoudian Ben Haikazoun through five sets today and led Bahrain to a 4-1 victory in Davis Cup play.

Bahrain, playing in the Davis Cup for the first time, now meets Thailand in April in the second round of the 12-member Asia-Oceania zone Group 2.

Abdul Ali, slowed by an ankle injury that brought him a time violation warning, beat the second-ranked Syrian 6-3, 6-0, 5-7, 5-7, 6-4.

Bahrain split Friday's opening singles 1-1 and beat Syria in doubles play yesterday.

"I'm very happy, and I'm looking forward to playing in Thailand," Abdul Ali said.

Syrian team manager Samih Al Jabi Ben Adib said: "It's all a matter of luck... the wind was his (Ben Haikazoun's) only enemy."

SPORTS BRIEFS

United triumph

LONDON, Feb 5, (UPI): Manchester United jumped to fifth in the English Soccer League First Division today with a 1-0 victory over Tottenham in a match that never really caught fire. Brian McClair scored for United in the 57th minute, tapping in a Gordon Strachan centre. The victory, in a game that saw few scoring chances for either side, capped a month of progress for United. It was McClair's fourth goal in four matches, and the fourth time he has scored against Tottenham in their last four clashes.

Youth soccer

DAMMAM, Saudi Arabia, Feb 5, (AP): A 25-member Argentine squad arrived yesterday to start preparing for the Feb 16-March 3 World Youth Soccer Cup tournament being held in this country.

Contreras wins

CARACAS, Feb 5, (Reuters): Israel Contreras of Venezuela knocked out Italy's Maurizio Lupino after 37 seconds of the first round to win the newly-created World Boxing Organisation bantamweight title yesterday.

Fendick triumphs

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Feb 5, (Reuters): Top-seed Patty Fendick of the United States made it two in a row by beating crowd-favourite Belinda Cordwell of New Zealand 6-2, 6-0 in the final of the Auckland women's tennis tournament today.

World Cup

PARIS, Feb 5, (Reuters): Chinese swimmers Li Lin and Qian Hong stole much of the limelight at the Paris World Cup event yesterday, leaving their rivals trailing way behind as they won their races.

Match adjourned

ANTWERP, Belgium, Feb 5, (AP): The fourth game in the World Chess championship candidates quarterfinal between Holland's Jan Timman and Hungary's Lajos Portisch was adjourned after 62 moves yesterday.

Ball race

NUSA DUA, Feb 5, (Reuters): Favourites Arturo Barrios and Liz McColgan overcame the heat and stifling humidity to win the men's and women's sections respectively of the Bali 10-km road race today.

Rugby match

LONDON, Feb 5, (Reuters): England have named an unchanged team for their Five Nations Rugby Union Championship third round match against Ireland in Dublin on Feb 18.

Victorian Open

MELBOURNE, Feb 5, (Reuters): Australian Mike Clayton ended five years without a championship victory by winning his second Victorian Open golf title today.

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (Reuters): Kuwait, four-times Gulf soccer champions, has fired Brazilian coach Miguel Perera after being beaten by the United Arab Emirates in a World Cup qualifying match on Friday.

The president of the Kuwait Football Association, Sheikh Fahd Al Ahmed Al Sabah, told reporters that Perera was responsible for the 1-0 defeat.

"The coach is personally, completely responsible... because I personally and members of the board and the training committee were not happy with the way he fielded the team," the local press quoted him as saying.

Declined

Perera is the sixth foreign coach to lose his job with Kuwait's national team in seven years. Sheikh Fahd said a new coach would arrive in March but declined to name him.

Kuwait leads the World Cup's qualifying West Asian Group Three with six points to the UAE's four, but the UAE is heavily favoured to qualify by beating Pakistan next Friday in the last group match.

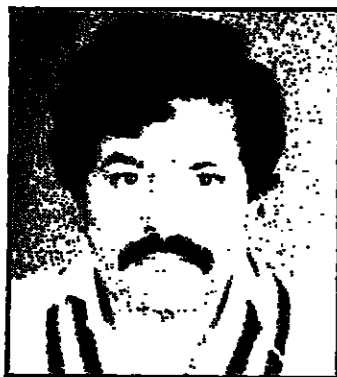
Kuwait reached the World Cup finals in 1982 but has fared poorly during Perera's two-year tenure, finishing fifth out of seven Arab teams in the 1988 Gulf Championships.

French soccer

PARIS, Feb 5, (Reuters): French First Division soccer results yesterday

Life: Cannes 0, Marseille 0; Montpelier 2, Lens 0; Nice 1, Metz 1; St Etienne 1, Bordeaux 0; Strasbourg 3, Laval 0; Toulouse 1, Caen 0; Toulouse 1, Nantes 2.

Hawks crush Galaxy to reach final



Waheed: five wickets

HAWKES scored a six-wicket victory over Galaxy to reach the final of the Pat Keely Trophy at the KOC ground on Friday.

Galaxy, after winning the toss, opted to bat first and opened their innings through Ashraf Rana and Riaz to the bowling of Sakawat and Frankie.

Both the openers played cautiously but soon Galaxy lost their first wicket when Riaz was run out. Raza, the next batsman in, did not last long and was bowled by Waheed, who had replaced Frankie. Waheed took five wickets, including that of Haider.

While wickets kept falling at one end, Ashraf Rana kept grafting the runs at the other end. By the end of the 22 allotted overs, Galaxy had scored 129 for the loss of seven wickets. Ashraf Rana remained unbeaten on 79.

First

Hawks opened their innings through Amjad and Shivi, to the bowling of Ghulam Haider and Qamar. Amjad was the first to be out, lbw to Haider.

Shivi mistimed a ball from Ashraf Rana and spooned an easy catch after scoring 29. Chris Somsekere was in great form and hit Riaz Chaudhry for 18 runs in one over.

Chris went on to score an unbeaten 77 as Hawks went past the victory target, scoring 132 for four, in 17.5 overs.

Lyle shares lead with three golfers

PACIFIC PALISADES, Calif., Feb 5, (Reuters): Briton Sandy Lyle shared the lead with three golfers midway through the third round of the \$1 million Los Angeles Open golf tournament, suspended yesterday due to darkness.

Lyle was eight-under-par for the tournament through nine holes of the third round with Hale Irwin, Mark Calcavecchia and Fred Couples. Couples had completed 11 holes when darkness forced the suspension of play, stranding 69 golfers.

Two strokes off the pace was Steve Pate followed another shot back by Briton Nick Faldo, Mike Reid, Gene Sauers and Mark Brooks.

Torrential rains on Friday forced suspension of the second round, which was completed yesterday morning and made it impossible to complete the third round.

Five other foreign golfers made the second-round cut. Fulton Allem of South Africa completed his second round yesterday, carding an even-par 71 for a 141.

Missing the cut of 145 were Wayne Grady of Australia, Aki Ohmachi and Kikuo Arai of Japan, and Ken Brown of Britain.

Serena helps Inter outplay Torino

ROME, Feb 5, (Reuters): Two goals from Aldo Serena lifted unbeaten Internazionale Milan to a 2-0 home win over Torino today as Inter kept their lead at the halfway stage of the Italian season.

Serena struck after just two minutes, chipping in a cross from Argentina's Ramon Diaz, and scored again in the 19th when he headed home a pass from West German Andreas Brehme.

The goals took Serena's League goal total to 10 and ensured Inter a three-point lead over Napoli, 1-0 winners at Pisa.

With 28 points from 16 matches, Inter are six points clear of third-placed Sampdoria, 1-0 winners at home to Lazio thanks to a first half goal from by Roberto Mancini.

Napoli went to Pisa buoyed by

a 2-0 win there in the first leg of the Italian Cup semifinals on Wednesday — but with Argentine captain Diego Maradona labouring with a cold and Pisa out for revenge it was not the easy ride they expected.

Andrea Carnevale broke the ice in the 32nd minute when he broke into the area to head Napoli into the lead.

Belgian striker Francis Severijns, brought on as a substitute, missed an open goal for Pisa in the 50th minute and Napoli keeper Giuliano Giuliani had to make a spectacular save seconds from time to claim the two points.

On the day the four clubs at the top played the four at the bottom, struggling Lecce caused the biggest upset by beating fourth-placed Atalanta 2-1.

Argentine midfielder Juan Alberto Barbas shot Lecce ahead after just 41 seconds and defender Luigi Garza made it two in the 67th minute. It was only the second defeat this season for Atalanta, whose consolation came from the penalty spot.

Dutch European Footballer of the Year Marco van Basten gave defending champions AC Milan a 2-0 win at bottom club Ascoli with a goal in each half, the second from the penalty spot, to lift the club to fifth place, nine points behind Inter.

Juventus had to battle for a point in their 1-1 draw at Pescara after unmarked Brazilian Tita swooped on a loose ball in the 43rd minute and put them a goal down.

Portuguese midfielder Rui Barros levelled in the 49th from a

pass from Italian veteran Alessandro Altobelli.

Fiorentina, who face Inter next Sunday, slumped 1-0 at struggling Bologna, who had a penalty saved by Fiorentina keeper Marco Landucci in the 90th minute.

Results

Ascoli	0	AC Milan	2
Bologna	0	Fiorentina	1
Como	0	Cesena	0
Inter	2	Torino	0
Juventus	1	Pescara	1
Lecce	2	Atalanta	1
Pisa	0	Napoli	1
Roma	0	Vercina	0
Sampdoria	1	Lazio	0

Standings

Leading standings after Sunday's matches (tabulate under played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):						
Inter	16	12	4	0	25	5 28
Napoli	16	11	3	2	22	11 25
Sampdoria	16	8	6	2	20	9 22
Atalanta	16	6	8	2	16	11 20
AC Milan	16	7	5	4	24	13 19
Juventus	16	6	7	3	25	18 19

Gulf rally

KUWAIT, Feb 5, (KUNA): The Kuwait Ahli Club, for Tourism and Automobiles Services, has reached an agreement with the Iraqi Olympic Committee and Iraqi Automobile Society on holding an annual Arab Gulf Rally, governed by international rules.

A source at the Ahli Club said that this year's rally would start from Kuwait for Iraq on Oct 9.

Before the rally, a sports, cultural and social Iraqi Week will be held in Kuwait and Iraq will host a similar Kuwaiti event at the end of the rally.

Ewing takes Knicks past Pacers

NEW YORK, Feb 5, (AP): Patrick Ewing scored 19 points and blocked five shots as the New York Knicks defeated Indiana Pacers 113-106 last night, the Pacers' fifth consecutive loss.

The Knicks led most of the game, but had to survive a 10-0 spurt in the final quarter. A drive by Vern Fleming ended the run and gave Indiana its only lead since the first quarter, 94-93, with 6:23 to play.

Ewing then rejected a shot by Wayman Tisdale and Gerald Wilkins ended a streak of eight consecutive New York misses with a layup to put the Knicks ahead again.

Indiana turned the ball over on its next two possessions and the score was tied twice before a dunk by Ewing put the Knicks ahead to stay, 100-98, with 5:21 to play.

Chuck Person had 23 points for Indiana and Rik Smits scored 10 of his 20 in the final quarter for the Pacers.

In other National Basketball Association games yesterday, Milwaukee defeated Washington 113-102; Denver edged Utah 127-126; Atlanta beat Phoenix 118-116; Portland routed San Antonio 137-100; and Golden State defeated the Los Angeles Clippers 116-107.

Bucks 113 Bullets 102

Ricky Pierce scored nine of his 21 points in the fourth quarter, leading the Milwaukee Bucks to a 113-102 victory over the Washington Bullets.

Nuggets 127, Jazz 126

Walter Davis' jumper with one second remaining gave the Denver Nuggets a 127-126 victory over the Utah Jazz.

Hawks 118, Suns 116, OT

Moses Malone scored a season-high 37 points and sank a decisive jumper with 1:05 remaining as the Atlanta Hawks scored the final eight points in overtime and beat the Phoenix Suns 118-116.

Deceptive system conceals close fight for Kuwait title

By Gail Seery

THE 1988/89 Kuwait National Rally Championships will not finish until April, and looks like being one of the most closely fought seasons for a number of years. It is not easy to get a genuine feel for where the lead lies, as drivers have to drop the results of two events — one local, and one international rally before the scores are totted up.

Eid Falah currently leads the championship with 113 points, and Tareq Al Wazzan is in second place with 94 points. This lead looks unquestionable until we deduct Falah's 1988 International points — 16, and 2 points for the season opener in which he blew the engine of the Opel Ascona. Wazzan however has only 6 points to lose, and this readjustment leaves Falah just seven points ahead of Wazzan with a total of 72 points still to be gained.

On the other hand Tareq Al

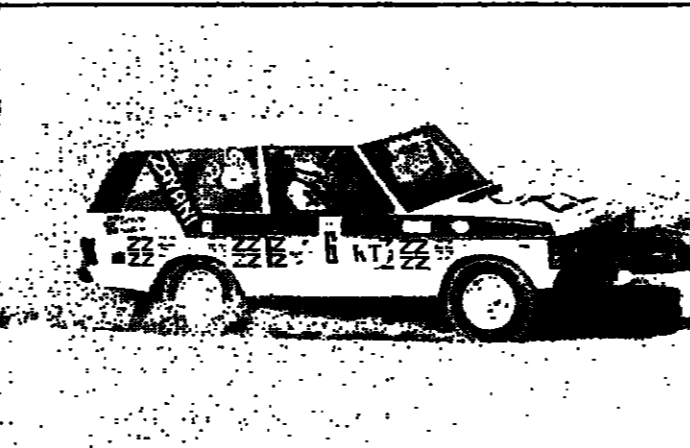
Aliyan who currently lies third with 91 points may have to drop around 35 points — 28 from the 1988 International, assuming he better his result in March, and 7 points from his worst local event. This drags him down to 56 points. Ahmed Al Helal is fourth with 86 points, and like Wazzan has only 6 points to drop. The competition should now be a battle between Helal, Wazzan and Falah.

Exact

This system is deceptive, and even some of the drivers seem uncertain of their exact standing. The next rally for them is the Kuwait International Rally on March 16 and 17, for which double points are awarded, and the final round will take place on April 7.

The edge lies with Eid Falah; neither Wazzan nor Helal can afford to make any mistakes in the International Rally.

Wazzan was naturally disappointed with his second place in Friday's local rally, but felt that



Eid Falah: leads the standings

he had driven well, amidst a host of frustrating problems. "In the first stage I was using the wrong tyres and was sliding about too much. On the second stage the drive shaft broke, so we had to drive slowly for two stages until we had a chance to change it. Once it was changed things looked better — for a while."

"It was a very good rally, but the stages, gave an advantage to the 4wd. We could not afford to push too hard and risk breaking the car as it must be ready for the International next month. I'm sorry not to finish first, but I'm glad to come in second after picking up a three minute penalty."

"I was waiting for my time to get into parc ferme, but the car stopped when Khaled called me. I checked and called my service crew over, but I couldn't find the problem and the car had to be pushed started before driving in. After that I couldn't catch Eid, but I was determined to take second place. I'm sorry for Ahmed Helal, who rolled — we had a good competition."

"The rally was good and well organised but I thought we would have stronger competition from the other drivers. From the start Zafiri and Hussein were out. They were good drivers with good cars, but as usual the fight was between me, Eid and Ahmed."

"My only criticism is that 30 minutes from time control to time control is too long to keep drivers and their teams hanging around." Again Wazzan was angered by the length of time the drivers had to wait in the cold for the results to be prepared.

Khaled Khalifa, his co-driver, added, "The rally was very good, but we had a few problems. Wazzan's driving was perfect, and he was handling the Opel more confidently. I'm very sorry that Ahmed and Fahad rolled, and glad that no-one was hurt."

Ahmed Al Helal explained how he came to roll. "There was a rock on the track. It had been at the side of the road before, but this time it had been moved onto the track. We hit it and we rolled."

The car landed on its wheels, we started it and then realised that it was no good and got out. The car is not finished, but it's not looking too good."

Ironically Helal had encountered a similar problem on his first circuit of that particular stage. "It was at the same place, when the car was suffering from a lack of traction. We went off the track, and had trouble pushing the car back on," he said.

For any driver, keeping in the rally is enough of a struggle, and most will be driving against themselves rather than chasing anyone else in particular. Friday's rally saw a remarkable show of determination from Hossam Al Sayafe.

"On the first stage I punctured the front wheel, and then lost control at the end of the stage. On the second stage the rear wheel punctured, and the fuel pump and battery failed. We stopped twice in the stage. At the start of the third stage I heard a noise — when I finished the stage the axle

was dancing to the left and right. Everyone told me to stop but I tied the axle with ropes, cancelled the rear axle and continued in front wheel drive with back wheels dancing along behind."

There was no speed in the turns, but I was really determined to finish. It's the best rally I have done. I feel I have achieved something," Sayafe said on Friday evening.

Established

Younis Ali had been slowed when he thought he heard a noise in his engine on stages 3 and 4; once it was established that there was no problem, he was able to speed up again and eventually finished eleventh in his Lada 1600. Even so he had three punctures and a broken windscreen from the vibration of the roll cage.

Now drivers will be taking time to prepare their cars for the International Rally, a far more demanding event than the average local, as it stretches across a gruelling two days.

